



# Minnesota Valley Action Council, Inc. Head Start Program

05CH8395-000  
Annual Report to Public  
July 2016 - June 2017

## MISSION STATEMENT

Minnesota Valley Action Council, Inc. (MVAC) is a community action agency. We are for communities, not for profit. We have served the people of south central Minnesota since 1965. We believe that hard work should be valued and rewarded, that working people are struggling and that MVAC provides solutions. We develop resources and opportunities that empower people in low-wage work to secure affordable housing, viable transportation, employment, training for employment and educational opportunities for children. MVAC provides services in Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, LeSueur, Martin, Nicollet, Sibley, Waseca and Watonwan counties.



### MVAC

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This report has been prepared in order to comply with the Head Start Reauthorization Act of 2007. The Act states that:

*"Each Head Start agency shall make available to the public a report published at least once in each fiscal year that discloses the following information from the recently concluded fiscal year, except that reporting such information shall not reveal personally identifiable information about an individual child or parent:*

- (A) The total amount of public and private funds received and the amount from each source*
- (B) An explanation of budgetary expenditures and proposed budget for the fiscal year.*
- (C) The total number of children and families served, the average monthly enrollment (as percentage of funded enrollment), and the percentage of eligible children served.*
- (D) The results of the most recent review by the Secretary and the financial audit.*
- (E) The percentage of enrolled children that received medical and dental exams.*
- (F) Information about parent involvement activities.*
- (G) The agency's efforts to prepare children for kindergarten.*
- (H) Any other information required by the "Secretary."*

## Head Start Philosophy

The early education environment, whether in the home or in a school, should provide a rich variety of activities that will foster the child's physical, developmental, social and emotional growth. Families are encouraged to be equal partners in their child's learning and development. The potential for learning is greatest during the early years of a child's life; therefore, learning opportunities should be provided to children at the earliest age possible.

**HEAD START FUNDING SOURCES for April 1, 2016 -June 30, 2017**

Federal Head Start Grant April 1-March 31

State Head Start Grant July 1 - June 30

MN Dept of Education Pathway II Early Learning Scholarships July 1 - June 30

<b>Total</b>	<b>575 children (467 federal; 90 state; 18 MDE Pathway II)</b>
Federal Head Start Funds	\$2,978,511
Federal Training & Technical Assistance Funds	\$41,409
Federal Duration Start-Up Funds	\$100,395
Federal Duration Funds	\$268,577
Minnesota Head Start Funds	\$810,225
MN Dept of Education Early Learning Scholarships	\$203,005.68
Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP food Reimbursement)	<u>\$125,941</u>

**Total** \$4,528,063.68

**Non- Federal Share (In-kind) 20% Match** \$780,079 Required

\$1,004,191 Total collected

- Rent (\$571,282)
- Volunteer time (\$432,128)
- Goods/materials donated (\$781)

**BUDGET**

Wages	64%	Contracts	2%
Training	2%	Travel	3%
Supplies	3%	Fringe Total	15%
		Other	11% (rent, utilities, cost ctrs, fees/dues, printing, food, etc.)

Head Start Employees = 99  
Program Volunteers = 1,113

**ENROLLMENT**

- In 2016-17, through all funding sources, MVAC was funded to serve 575 Head Start children. This number includes 467 federal slots, 90 infants, toddlers and pregnant women slots and 18 State Pathway II Early Learning Scholarship slots.
- Except for the months of Sept-Dec. 2016, we maintained 100% monthly enrollment of 553 throughout the program year.
- Total actual enrollment for the year was 693 (including all adds & drops). 553 were in regular Head Start & 140 were in our birth to 3 program.
- Average monthly attendance 87.63%
- 91% of the participants (633) were income eligible; 9% (60) were over-income.

**MONITORING REVIEWS**

- Our program participated in 1 federal Head Start monitoring event in March 2017 - which was ERSEA (Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment & Attendance). This review resulted in no non-compliances. In April of 2017, our program had a CACFP (Child & Adult Care Food Program) monitoring review. This review resulted in 10 findings. A Corrective Action Plan was submitted & accepted. No further actions are required.

**MEDICAL AND DENTAL EXAM RATE**

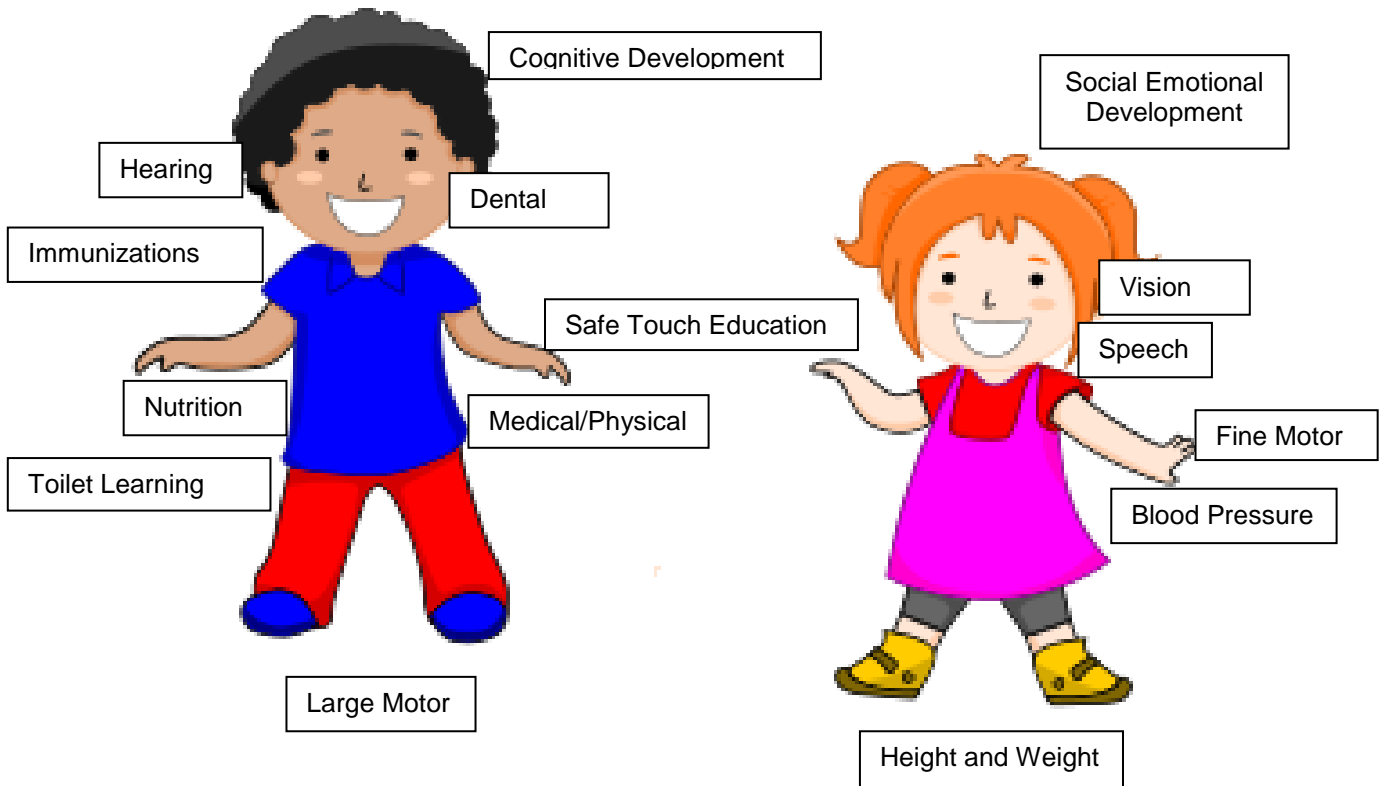
- 93% children received a medical exam and 70% of the children received a dental exam.

**ANNUAL FINANCIAL AUDIT**

- Minnesota Valley Action Council, Inc. contracts for and receives a required annual audit. There were no findings from the July 2017 audit. MVAC is considered low risk & compliant with generally accepted accounting practices.

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# MVAC Head Start's Whole Child Approach



Head Start has adopted the “whole child” approach to school readiness. School readiness includes five developmental areas that are important to a child’s readiness for school: approaches to learning, social and emotional development, language and literacy, cognition and perceptual, motor and physical development.

Our staff will be looking at any area that could affect a child’s normal development towards school readiness - including but not limited to medical & dental conditions, nutritional needs, vision & hearing results, and the home environment. By providing support to the family, Head Start can help prepare each child for school success by recognizing that all these areas are connected and help shape a child and their family for future success even beyond school.

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*“If kids come to us from strong, healthy, functioning families, it makes our job easier. If they do not come to us from strong, healthy, functioning families, it makes our job more important.” -Barbara Colorose*

*Head Start programs prepare America’s most vulnerable young children to succeed in school and in life beyond school.*

*To achieve this, MVAC delivers Head Start comprehensive services to children and families in core areas of early learning, health, and family well-being while engaging parents as partners every step of the way.*

*Head Start’s comprehensive approach to school readiness has been proven successful for the past 50+ years and ensures the services to the child & family include much more than just education and sets us apart from other early learning environments.*

## PARENT & FAMILY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

- Parent & family engagement is the cornerstone of Head Start. It is our philosophy that the *Parent* is the first *Teacher* of their child.
- MVAC functions under the Head Start Parent, Family & Community Engagement Framework (PFCE) which emphasizes 7 family outcomes which results in positive & goal-oriented relationships. Staff help the family be successful as parents & to achieve goals, dreams & ambitions.

### **1. Family Well-Being**

Parents and families are safe, healthy, and have increased financial security.



### **2. Positive Parent-Child Relationships**

Beginning with transitions to parenthood, parents and families develop warm relationships that nurture their child's learning and development.

### **3. Families as Lifelong Educators**

Parents and families observe, guide, promote, and participate in the everyday learning of their children at home, school and in their communities.



### **4. Families as Learners**

Parents and families advance their own learning interests through education, training and other experiences that support their parenting, careers, and life goals.



### **5. Family Engagement in Transitions**

Parents and families support and advocate for their child's learning and development as they transition to a new learning environment, including Early Head Start (EHS) to Head Start, EHS/Head Start to other early learning environments, and Head Start to Kindergarten through elementary

### **6. Family Connections to Peers and Community**

Parents and families form connections with peers and mentors in formal or informal social networks that are supportive and/or educational and that enhance social well-being and community life.



### **7. Families as Advocates and Leaders**

Parents and families participate in leadership development, decision-making, program policy development, or community and state organizing activities to improve children's development and learning experiences.

## EARLY LEARNING

- MVAC offers Head Start home-based programming, along with center and combination-based options in our 9 county service area.
- MVAC's Head Start program uses The Creative Curriculum and Teaching Strategies GOLD (TSG) child assessment tool.
- MVAC received funding (\$203,005.68) from the MN Dept of Education to serve children with Pathway II Early Learning Scholarships at our licensed center-based locations in Mankato, St. Peter, New Ulm, Le Center, Fairmont, Blue Earth, Waseca & St. James. These scholarships allowed us to serve extra children from off our wait list, provide enhancements such as extra support staff in the classrooms, extended day services, bussing, and special parent & family events.
- Our New Ulm & Le Center classroom sites provided all-day services at 6 hours each day, 4 days per week.
- MVAC utilized the staff-child interaction observation tools CLASS (CLassroom Assessment Scoring System) and HOVRS (HOme Visiting Rating Scale) to assess quality staff-child interactions.
- There were 211 kindergarten-aged children that transitioned out of Head Start in May 2017.

## HEALTH SERVICES

- Ensured that 554 children were screened for hearing and vision through our Head Start program.
- Number of children at the end of enrollment year with health insurance: 526
- Number of children at the end of enrollment year who were up to date on all immunizations appropriate for their age: 494
- 476 children received preventative dental care

## MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

- MVAC partnered with SMIF (Southern MN Initiative Foundation) to provide Social/Emotional AmeriCorps LEAP Volunteer Members to serve in the Mankato, Waseca, St. James and St. Peter Head Start classrooms. These LEAP (Learning Early Achieves Potential) members helped support the Head Start teaching staff by providing individual social emotional support to the children in these classrooms.
- MVAC partners with Counseling Services of Southern MN (CSSM) to provide mental health consultation services to Head Start parents and staff. CSSM staff are co-located at our Mankato Head Start site to provide family counseling services. Mental Health Consultants also observe children in our classrooms and offer regular reflective consultation to our home base staff.
- 36 children were referred by the program for mental health services outside of Head Start.

## DISABILITIES

- 124 total preschool children, or 22.4% of the children served in our Head Start program, had diagnosed disabilities.
- MVAC partners with local school districts to provide one-on-one Paras in the classrooms to support the comprehensive & inclusive services to children with disabilities.

## FAMILY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

- MVAC hosted a Fall Festival in October 2017 & a Spring Fling in April 2017. These community events were held at our Mankato Administrative office location and provided a fun carnival atmosphere to collaborate with community partners such as Open Door Health Center, Mayo Clinic Health Systems, Mankato Police & Fire Depts., Leadie Eddie, and the MN Zoo.
- 262 fathers/father figures were involved in their child's Head Start experiences such as home visits, and/or parent-teacher conferences.
- MVAC served 22 homeless families and 26 foster children in the Head Start program.
- MVAC partners with local LEA (Local Education Agency) and Public School PreK programs through coordinated efforts, formal agreements and resource sharing to facilitate disability & transition services to all children.

## NUTRITION

- MVAC partnered with the University of Minnesota, Extension Services to provide Cooking Matters® classes to Head Start parents in Mankato, Blue Earth, St. James, and Le Center. The 6-week course teaches low-income adults about healthy meal preparation & sensible shopping on a limited budget.

## TRANSPORTATION

- MVAC provided bussing to 232 Head Start children in the last school year.
- MVAC was again a recipient of 12 child passenger safety car seats in February 2017 through a grant from the MN Office of Traffic Safety. The types of car seats included: convertible, combination, and high back booster. The conditions of the grant were that the car seats must go to low income families. Each seat distributed required a one-on-one or group presentation that includes a thorough educational component. Delivery of this educational piece and distribution of the seat was done by a person who is current in Child Passenger Safety certification. The car seats were given to families that did not have a car seat, were using an expired car seat or were in need of the next size/type of car seat.

## BIRTH-3 HOME BASE

- MVAC receives State monies to operate a Birth-3 Home Base program. On July 1, 2016, the program expanded to serve 90 slots and includes the counties of Blue Earth, Le Sueur, Nicollet and Watonwan Counties.
- This innovative program has focused specifically on providing supportive Head Start home visiting services to those that are homeless or in transitional housing, teen parents, child protection cases, county human services referrals, school district referrals, refugees/immigrants, and/or those in abuse shelters.
- This program option uses Teaching Strategies GOLD online assessment tool to monitor appropriate child growth & progress for school readiness of the infants & toddlers served and uses Growing Great Kids curriculum on home visits.
- The Birth-3 program served 22 children with a diagnosed disability or 15.7% of the total enrollment.

*"Early childhood education begins early, even before birth."*

## WHAT PARENTS SAY ABOUT HEAD START:

In spring 2017, Head Start parents were asked to fill out a Parent Program Evaluation. 575 evaluations were given out and 275 (48%) families responded. Some comments that were written by Head Start families:

*"This is my first experience with Head Start and it has been a fabulous experience for me and my adoptive child!"*

*"Helpful games and learning ideas, plus get to meet other families at Strong Fathers events."*

*"I think this is a wonderful program, everyone is amazing. Thank you for the awesome school year."*

*"Thanks for teaching my son different skills and his ABC's, numbers, shapes, and colors. It helps me a lot."*

*"The parent meetings are great, and learning new things about being a parent."*

*"Very satisfied with the Head Start program, Head Start has helped me with all three of my children!"*

*"I would recommend this school to others! I loved the teachers that helped my son in so many ways."*

*"Head Start is a great program with great staff. We couldn't have been more happy and pleased with all their help and support this year."*



### AGENCY'S EFFORTS TO PREPARE CHILDREN FOR KINDERGARTEN

- Program Long Range Goal: 80% of Head Start children will meet the targeted score for School Readiness in the Teaching Strategies Gold Assessment (TSG) tool by spring observation period.
- MVAC continues to maintain its Four-Star Accelerated MN Parent Aware Rating for all our center/combo licensed classroom sites.
- The Head Start program uses the Creative Curriculum for Preschoolers, Teaching Strategies GOLD online assessment tool, and IGDI's (Individual Growth & Development Indicators) to show growth & progress of an individual child, classroom and the overall program.
- We collect & report outcomes data on all children 3 times per year, have conferences with each parent and submit the data to our funding sources and community partners.
- MVAC uses the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five and is designed to represent the continuum of learning for infants, toddlers and preschoolers. This Framework is grounded in a comprehensive body of research regarding what young children should know and be able to do during these formative years.

*Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework*

	CENTRAL DOMAINS				
	APPROACHES TO LEARNING	SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT	LANGUAGE AND LITERACY	COGNITION	PERCEPTUAL, MOTOR, AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT
▲ INFANT/TODDLER DOMAINS	Approaches to Learning	Social and Emotional Development	Language and Communication	Cognition	Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development
● PRESCHOOLER DOMAINS	Approaches to Learning	Social and Emotional Development	Language and Communication Literacy	Mathematics Development Scientific Reasoning	Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development

**MVAC's Head Start School Readiness Goals  
2016-2017**

**MVAC's Head Start School Readiness Goals for Ages 0-5**

**Physical Development and Health**

- Children will control small muscles for manipulation and exploring.
- Children will control large muscles for movement, navigation and balance.
- Children will learn and demonstrate appropriate self-health, nutrition and safety habits.

**Social and Emotional Development**

- Children will develop healthy relationships and interactions with adults and peers.
- Children will participate cooperatively in groups, display self-regulation skills and internalize classroom rules, routines and directions.

**Approaches to Learning**

- Children will use curiosity, engagement and persistence to extend their learning.
- Children will engage in diverse approaches to learning that reflects social and cultural contexts such as biology, family history, culture and individual learning styles.
- Children will learn and use words to describe what they are thinking and doing.

**Language and Literacy**

- Children will listen to and understand language. (receptive)
- Children will use increasingly complex and varied vocabulary when speaking. (expressive)
- Children who are dual language learners will demonstrate progress in the ability to listen, understand and speak English and home language.
- Children will engage appropriately with stories and books and show an appreciation and knowledge of how print works.

**Cognition and General Knowledge**

- Children will use math in everyday routines and experiences.
- Children will engage in exploring their environment through observation and manipulation to gain a better understanding of information and activities in their surroundings.  
Children will use their skills in remembering information and connecting new and known experiences and information.



“Every child deserves a champion - an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection and insists that they become the best that they can possibly be.” -Rita Pierson

**Teaching Strategies GOLD Child Outcomes Assessment Data  
MVAC 2016-2017 School Year  
Agency Efforts to Prepare Children for School**

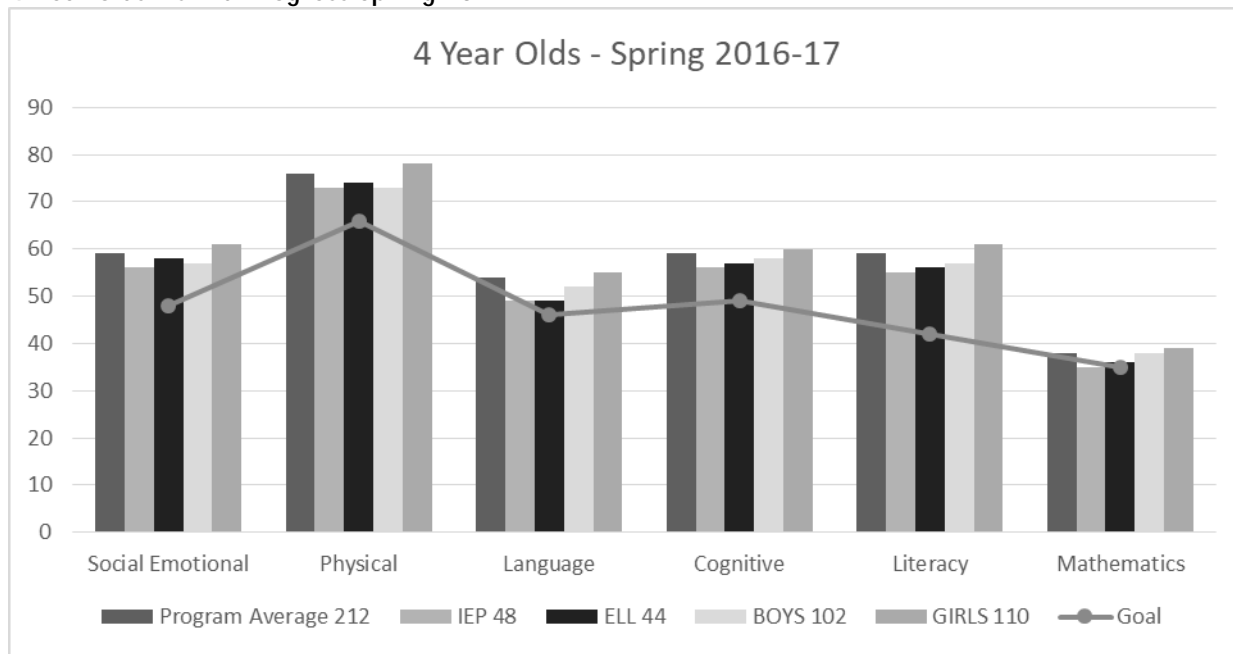
*Program Long Range Goal: 80% of Head Start children will meet the targeted score for School Readiness in the Teaching Strategies Gold Assessment (TSG) tool*

The 4 year old children (212) served in MVAC's Head Start programs in the spring of the 2016-17 year that met the Target Score in each area:

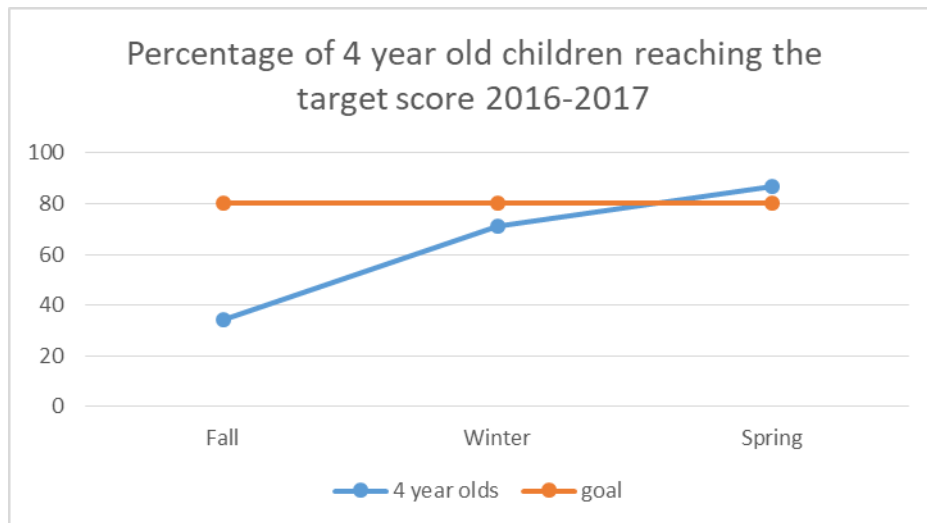
	Fall 2016	Winter	Spring 2017
Social Emotional	38%	75%	88%
Physical	50%	82%	94%
Language	45%	69%	86%
Cognitive	37%	70%	87%
Literacy	43%	70%	86%
Math	16%	42%	68%

Total Average: 84.8%

**4 Year olds - Child Progress Spring 2017**



10 less children than winter: 2 less with IEP, 4 less ELL, 7 less boys, 3 less girls  
 Social- Emotional increased by 7 points; Physical increased by 4 points; Language increased by 6 points;  
 Cognitive increased by 6 points; Literacy increased by 10 points; Math increased by 2 points



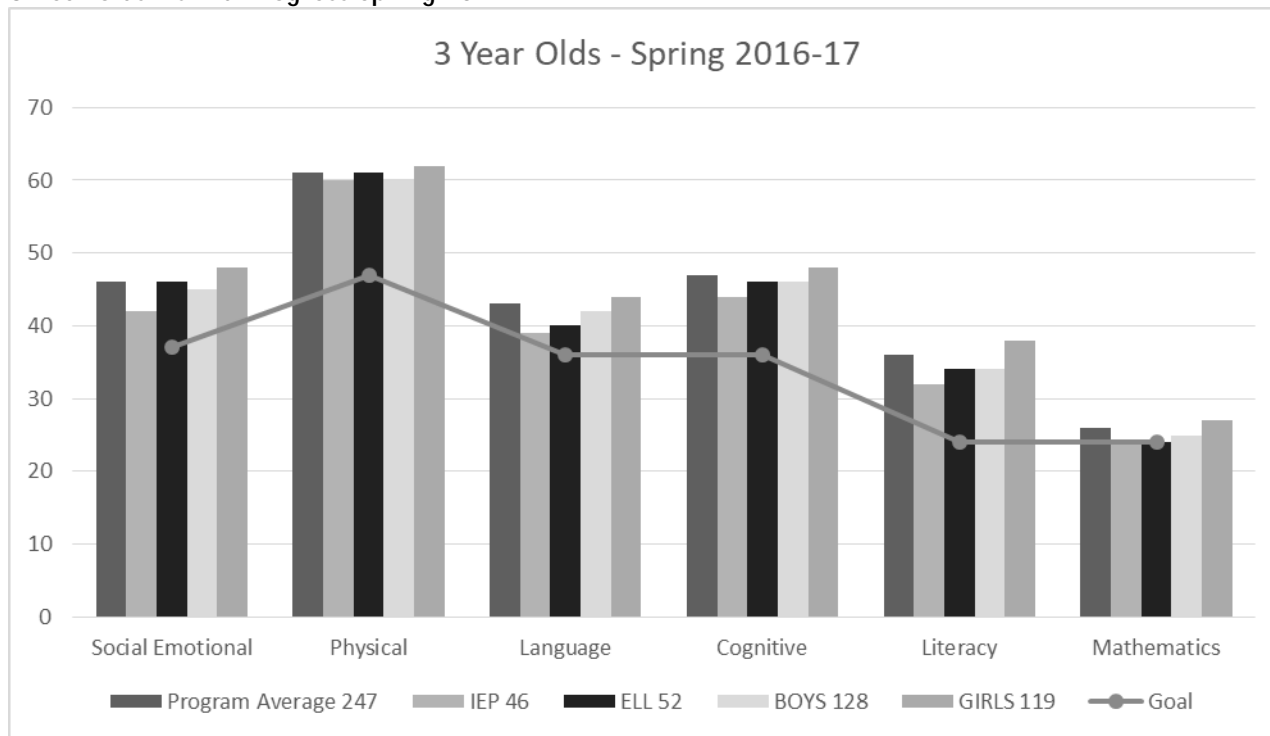


The 3 year old children (247) served in MVAC's Head Start programs in the spring of the 2016-17 year that met the Target Score:

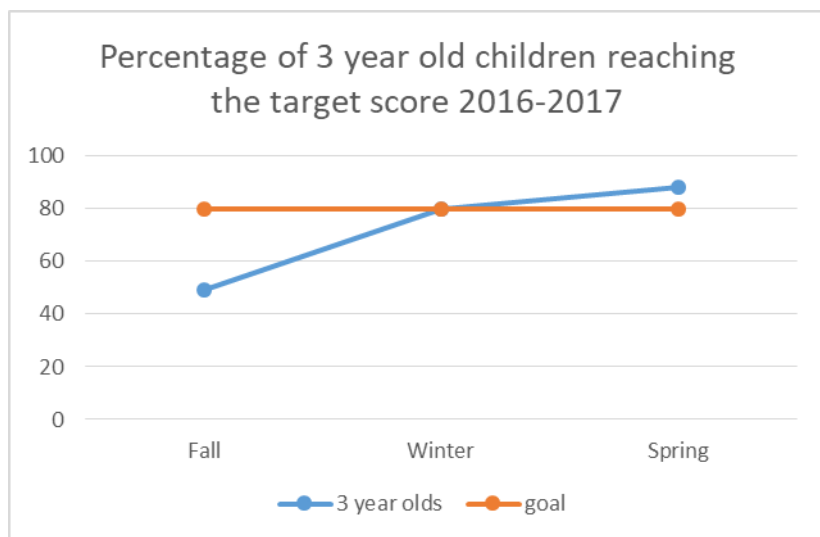
	Fall 2016	Winter	Spring 2017
Social Emotional	50%	77%	89%
Physical	81%	90%	99%
Language	50%	74%	83%
Cognitive	66%	87%	95%
Literacy	47%	74%	83%
Math	18%	50%	64%

Total Average: 85.5%

### 3 Year olds - Child Progress Spring 2017



7 more children than winter: 7 more IEP, 1 less ELL, 1 more boy, 6 more girls  
 Social-Emotional increased by 4 points; Physical increased by 2 points; Language increased by 7 points; Cognitive increased by 5 points; Literacy increased by 5 points; Math increased by 3 points



\*Data collected from Teaching Strategies GOLD online assessment tool

## Head Start WORKS for children, families and communities!

"Around here, we don't look backwards for very long... we keep moving forward, opening up new doors and doing new things because we're curious... and curiosity keeps leading us down new paths."

-Walt Disney