



Minnesota Valley Action Council, Inc.

Head Start Program

05CH8395-000

Annual Report to Public

July 2018 – June 2019

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.

(A.) HEAD START FUNDING SOURCES for April 1, 2018 –June 30, 2019

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

Total: 588 children (467 federal; 95 state; 7 CSBG, 19 MDE Pathway II)

Federal Head Start Funds	\$3,362,072
Federal Training & Technical Assistance Funds	\$41,409
Minnesota Head Start Funds	\$768,001
CSBG (Community Services Block Grant)	\$50,000
MN Dept of Education Early Learning Scholarships	\$165,000
Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP food Reimbursement)	<u>\$150,384</u>

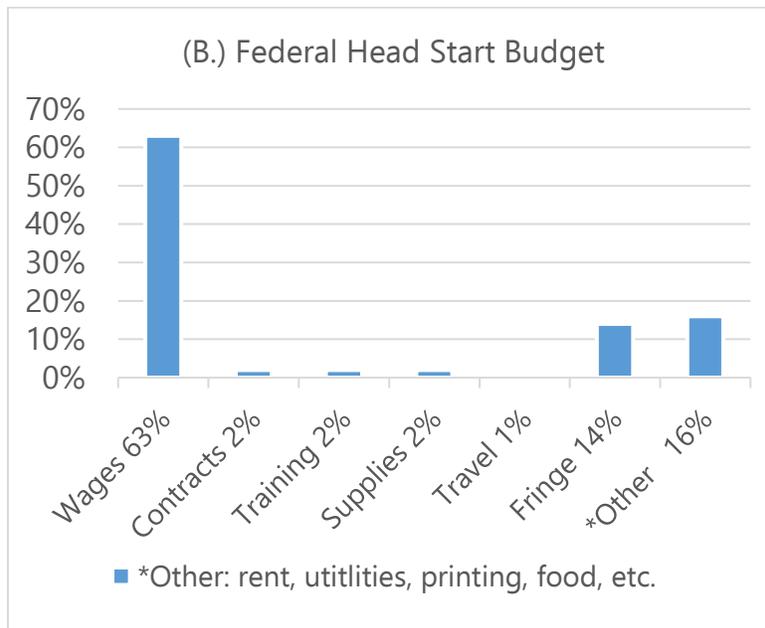
Total \$\$ **\$4,578,275**

Non- Federal Share (In-kind) 20% Match:

\$850,870 Required

\$976,631 Total collected

- Rent (\$539,385)
- Volunteer time (\$432,933)
- Goods/materials donated (\$4,313)



Head Start Employees = 106

Program Volunteers = 1,095

(C.) ENROLLMENT

- Total actual enrollment for the year was 693 (including all adds & drops). 547 were federal kids, 146 were state kids. 84% of the federal participants (458) were income eligible; 16% (89) were over-income
- We maintained 97.71% average federal enrollment each month
- Average monthly child attendance 82.71%
- 13 pregnant women were served in 2018-19

(D.) MONITORING REVIEWS

- Our program had no scheduled reviews in the past year from federal sources. We had four MN DHS Rule 3 Licensing annual site visits. Locations that were visited in 2019 included St. Peter (5.16.19), New Ulm (5.16.19), Mankato (3.20.19), and St. James (5.17.19). Those visits resulted in 4 citations at the Mankato location, 8 citations at St. Peter, 9 citations at New Ulm and 9 citations at St. James. The citations at all locations included annual training requirements, required documentation on forms, and specific wording on health policies. All citations were corrected within 30 days and documentation was submitted to DHS to fulfill the correction requirements.

(D.) ANNUAL FINANCIAL AUDIT

- Minnesota Valley Action Council, Inc. contracts for and receives a required annual audit. There were no findings from the July 2019 audit. MVAC is considered low risk & compliant with generally accepted accounting practices.

(E.) MEDICAL AND DENTAL EXAM RATE

- 96% children received a medical exam and 72% of the children received a dental exam.

*"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*

(F.) PARENT & FAMILY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES



Head Start practices the "whole family" approach when working with children, parents and caregivers. We believe that the child will be more prepared for school and life if the whole family feels supported and welcome in Head Start classrooms and at Parent Connect activities.

Our staff meet with parents to listen to their family story, needs, dreams and ambitions. The staff help families develop achievement plans in all areas of life: housing, transportation, health, higher education, their child's education and nutrition, parenting skills, financial security and many other areas that are determined to be important to each family.

Parent Connect activities are planned throughout the year to connect parents with the Head Start staff, other Head Start parents and to interact with their child in a school setting. *Make Parenting a Pleasure* is our research & evidence-based parenting curriculum used with parents throughout the school months –modules focused on self-care, stress & anger management, understanding child development, communication skills, and positive discipline.

- 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 school.

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.

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.

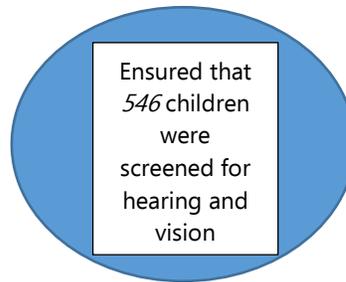



EARLY LEARNING

- 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 (\$165,000) 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, bussing, and special parent & family events.
- Our New Ulm, St. James, Blue Earth & Le Center classroom sites provided all-day services at 6.5 hours each day, 5 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 229 kindergarten-aged children that transitioned out of Head Start in May 2019.

HEALTH SERVICES

- Number of children at the end of enrollment year with health insurance: *516*
- Number of children at the end of enrollment year up to date on all immunizations: *496*
- *394 preschool* children received preventative dental care



MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

- *48* children were referred by the program for mental health services outside of Head Start.

DISABILITIES

- *132* total preschool children, or *24%* of the children served in our Head Start program, had diagnosed disabilities.

FAMILY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

- *226* fathers/father figures were involved in their child's Head Start experiences such as home visits, and/or parent-teacher conferences.
- *498* families received referrals & follow up services throughout the program year with emergency/crisis intervention, housing assistance, health education, substance abuse prevention/treatment, child abuse/neglect, domestic violence, child support assistance, parenting education, marriage education, mental health services, adult education/GED/ESL, job training, asset building, etc.
- MVAC served *38* homeless federal children and *19* foster care children in the Head Start program.

TRANSPORTATION

- MVAC provided bussing to *242* Head Start children in the last school year.



BIRTH-3 HOME BASE

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

- MVAC receives State monies to operate a Birth-3 Home Base program. We served 95 slots in the counties of Blue Earth, Le Sueur, Nicollet, Waseca and Watonwan Counties, with a total accumulative enrollment of 146 pregnant women and children.
- We also served an additional 7 slots of birth -3 aged children in a mixed-age home base model in Sibley and Faribault counties with CSBG (Community Services Block Grant) funds. Three Home Visitors had a caseload that included birth- 5 year old children, some being siblings from the same family.
- 29 children served were considered homeless; 6 children served were in foster care.
- 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 35 children with a diagnosed disability or 24% of the total enrollment.

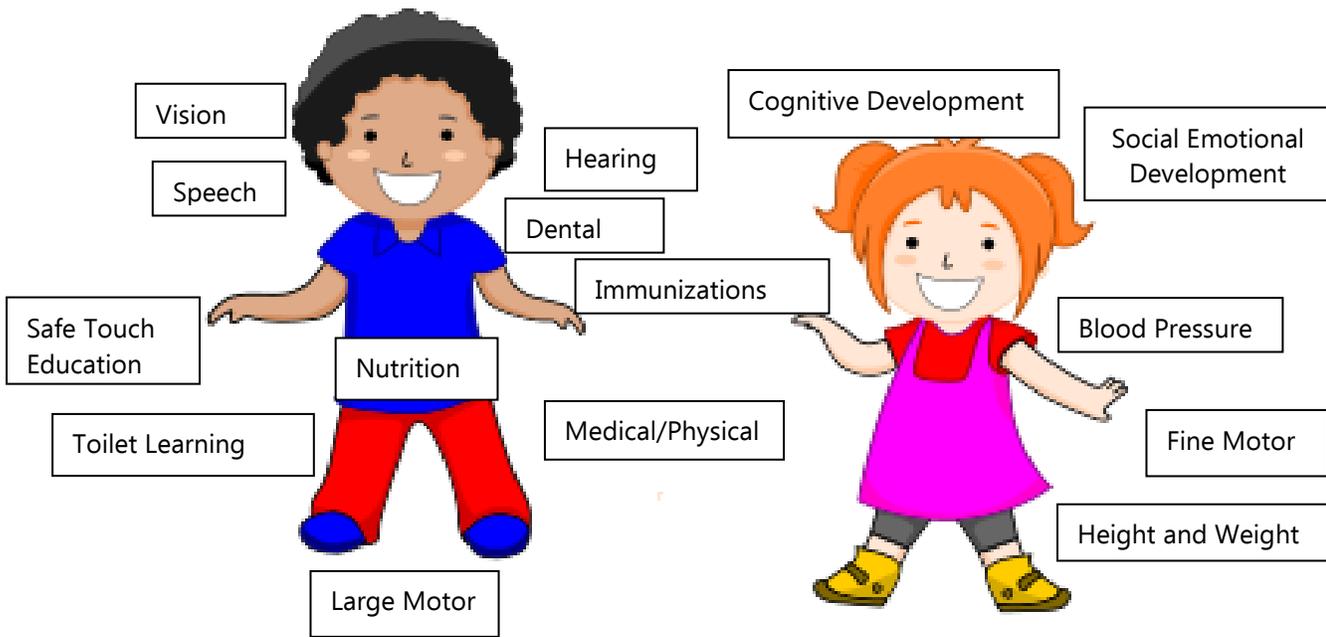
HEAR WHAT OUR PARENTS SAY ABOUT MVAC'S HEAD START:

In spring 2019, all Head Start parents were asked to fill out a Parent Survey. 566 evaluations were given out and 327 (57%) families responded. Some comments that were written by our Head Start families:

- *"All the staff in my son's classroom are always really helpful and kind. We appreciate them so much."*
- *"I'm very pleased with my child's Teacher, she always worked with our schedule because of work and family stuff. She is very good with my child and helps me learn a lot."*
- *"This program helps us to come away with lots of activities."*
- *"It was such a blessing to have home visits. I wish it was a broader age range, very good way to give children individual attention. As an adult, it was awesome talking to another adult."*
- *"Thank you for all the great help you guys offer my child and for helping her learn so much more."*
- *"Love working with Head Start! My kids love their Teachers and always look forward to seeing them; they go above and beyond with my family."*
- *"We loved the true connections our son made with his Teachers and Aides."*
- *"Using my ideas for planning home visits makes me feel like I am the Teacher."*



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.

*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.*



(G.) 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 Growing Great Kids, Inc., The Creative Curriculum for Preschoolers, and Teaching Strategies GOLD online assessment tool 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	Mathematics Development	Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development	
			Literacy	Scientific Reasoning		



MVAC's Head Start School Readiness Goals 2018-2019

MVAC's Head Start School Readiness Goals for Ages birth-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 day, in a 100 small ways, our children ask, ‘Do you hear me? Do you see me? Do I matter? Their behavior often reflects our response.’
–L.R. Knost

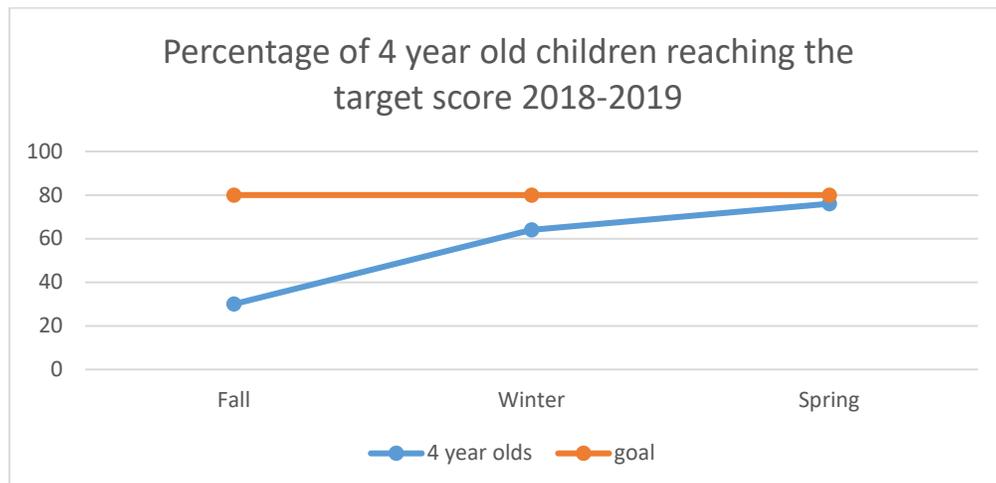
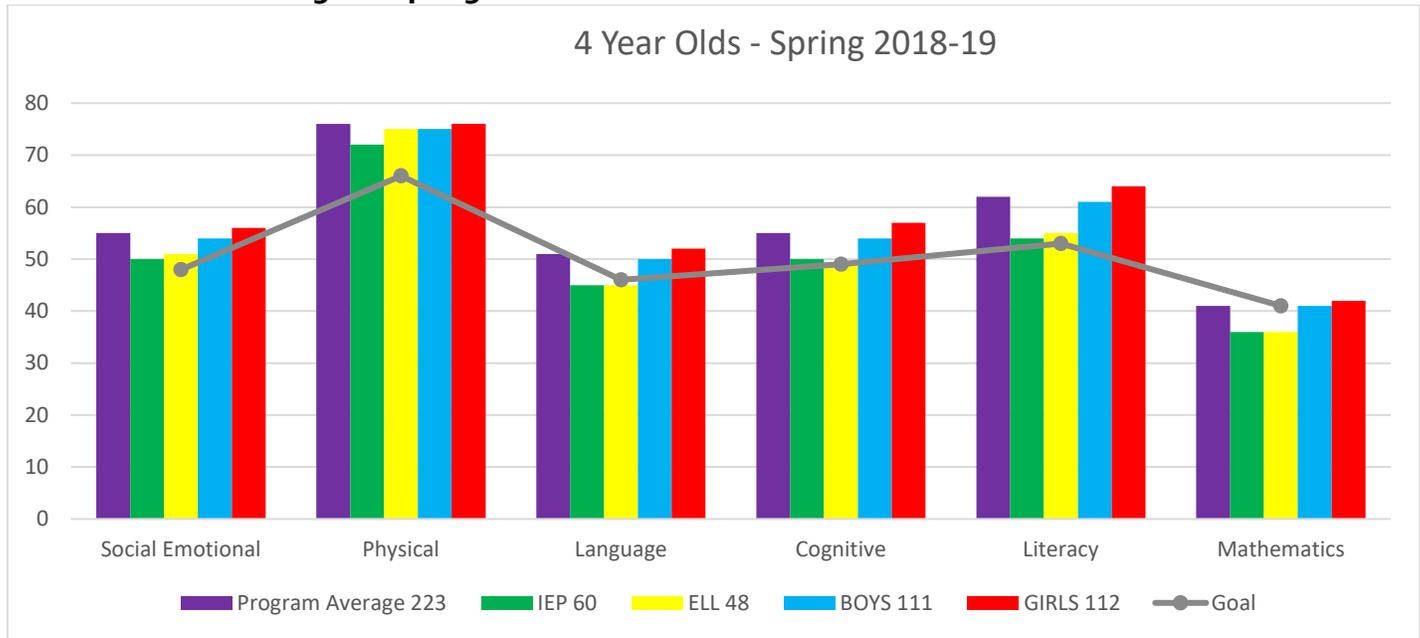
**Teaching Strategies GOLD Child Outcomes Assessment Data
 MVAC Head Start 2018-2019 School Year
 Agency Efforts to Prepare Children for School**

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

There were 223 four-year old children served in MVAC's Head Start program in the spring of the 2018-19 year. 169 (76%) children met the Target Score:

	Fall 2018	Winter	Spring 2019
Social Emotional	40%	69%	76%
Physical	53%	83%	86%
Language	37%	67%	77%
Cognitive	40%	68%	78%
Literacy	29%	51%	70%
Math	19%	39%	55%

4 Year olds - Child Progress Spring 2019

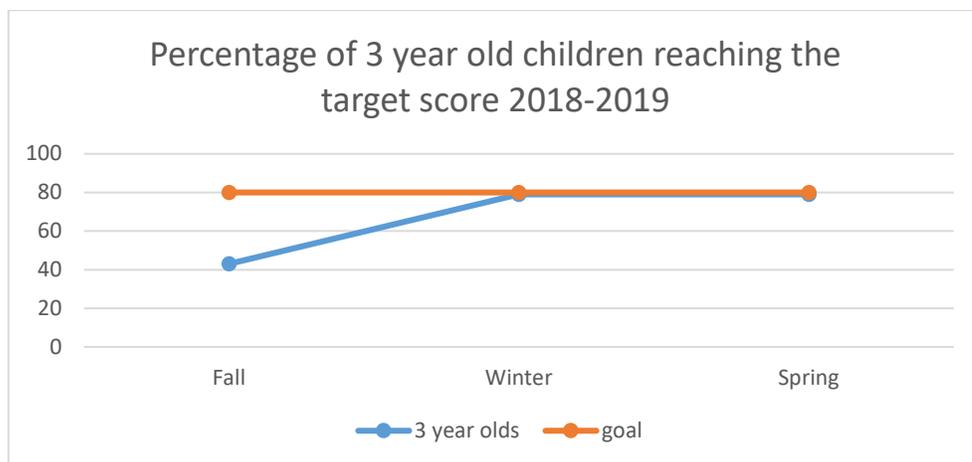
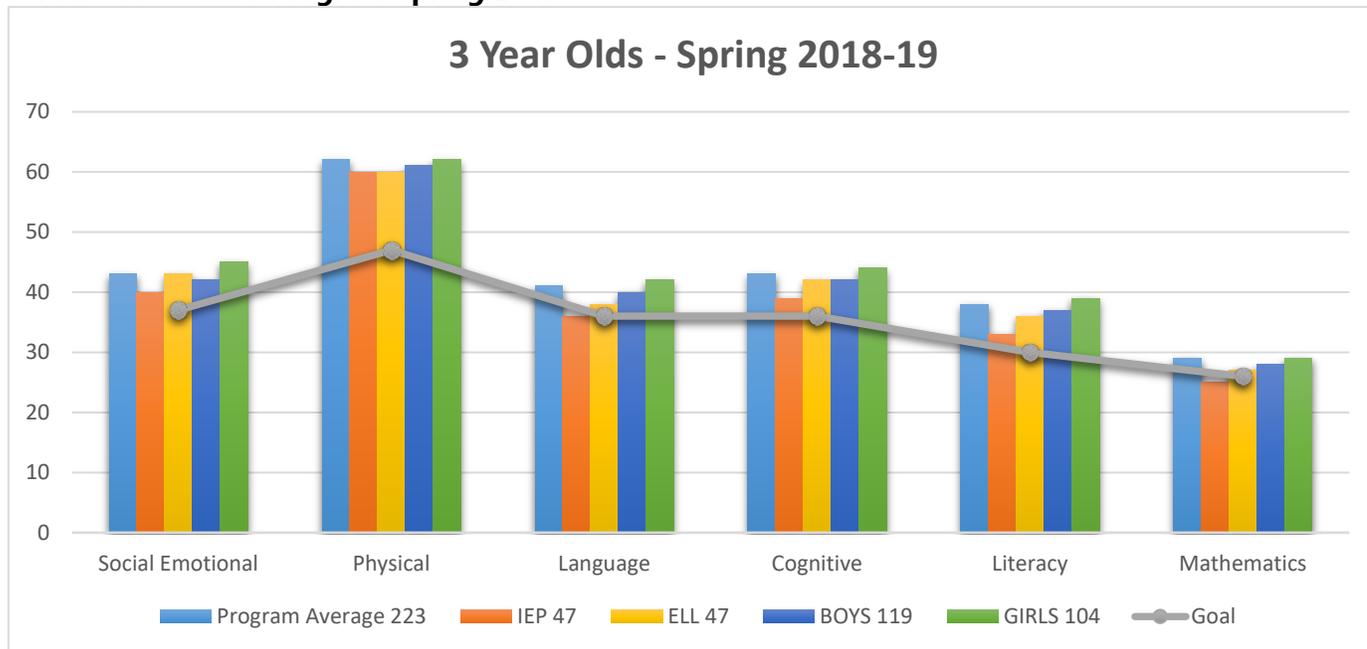


Assessment data continued....

There were 223 three-year old children served in MVAC's Head Start program in the spring of the 2018-19 year. 176 (79%) children met the Target Score:

	Fall 2018	Winter	Spring 2019
Social Emotional	45%	79%	78%
Physical	73%	95%	95%
Language	49%	70%	79%
Cognitive	58%	83%	83%
Literacy	26%	56%	87%
Math	18%	50%	63%

3 Year olds – Child Progress Spring 2019



"Children are not things to be molded, but are people to be unfolded."
-Jess Lair

*Data collected from Teaching Strategies GOLD online assessment tool

Head Start WORKS for children, families and communities!

Visit us at www.mnvac.org