Capital Area Head Start (CAHS) utilized the High Scope COR (Child Observation Record) Advantage assessment in 2017-2018 to calculate educational data for enrolled children at three points during the program year. CAHS School Readiness Goals are correlated directly to items in the COR assessment as well as the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five. This report summarizes data for the 2017-2018 program year for 897 children with three data collection points (enrolled from Fall 2017- Spring 2018). The 897 children include 111 Early Head Start children, 304 three year olds and 486 four year olds who were enrolled for all three reporting periods.

All three age groups showed age-appropriate progress in all categories/domains of learning and in all of the items correlated to CAHS school readiness goals.

**Summary of Findings**

**Preschool:**

On average, children aged 3-5 showed the most growth in these five areas: 1) Gross-motor Skills, 2) Natural and Physical World, 3) Book Enjoyment and Knowledge, 4) Emotions, and 5) Music. This may reflect several factors, such as 1) a substantial portion of each day spent outdoors (weather permitting); 2) continued focus on enhancing science materials and science content program-wide; 3) exposure to a wide variety of books of all genres; 4) consistent use of the PATHS curriculum to focus on identifying emotions in self and others, as well as increasingly consistent implementation of PBIS classroom strategies; and 5) use of music throughout the day and regular use of iPods in each classroom. Also of note, 2017-2018 scores reflect an increase over 2016-17 scores in Phonological Awareness.

Areas in which averages for enrolled children (ages 3-5) showed the smallest increases were Reading, Reflection, Writing, and Observing and Classifying. Three of these items, Reading, Reflection and Writing also showed smaller increases last year than other areas. In disaggregating scores for 3 year olds and 4 year olds, the areas of highest and lowest increases were consistent for both groups. It is important to note that all areas, including those showing the smallest gains, showed progress roughly equal to at least one year of growth and development; however these areas in particular deserve our close attention as they are widely considered to be some of the most important for school readiness (see Recommendations). Because many CAHS children begin Head Start with a significant skill deficit in these areas, it is vital that they progress at a greater rate if they are to “catch up” and leave preschool prepared for success in Kindergarten.

**Early Head Start:**

Children aged 0-3 showed most growth in these areas: Knowledge of Self and Others, Alphabetic Knowledge, Measurement, Listening and Comprehension, Personal Care and Healthy Behavior. Measurement was also one of items having the highest gains in program year 2016-2017.
Three items that have consistently had the highest scores are Personal Care and Healthy Behavior, Fine Motor Skills and Gross Motor Skills. Highest scores were also seen this year in Building Relationships with Other Children and Writing.

It appears that Early Head Start has the biggest impact on families and children in the area of Personal Care and Healthy Habits since this item is both one of the highest scores and highest gains. Early Head Start parents and home visitors partner to address each child’s individual outcomes and goals through individualized weekly home visits and bimonthly Family Days.

**Recommendations for Program Year 2018-2019:**

- Because the ability to think and analyze reflectively is positively and significantly related to executive function, continue to focus on the use of *reflection* with both teachers and children in preschool and home visitors, parents and children in Early Head Start. Assess whether teachers and home visitors may need training and support in providing the kinds of experiences that provide opportunities for this to be observed and assessed accurately.

- Consider additional professional development for teachers in the areas of *reading* and *writing*. The Literacy trainings teachers receive currently may need to be enhanced and/or extended. Consider bringing in an outside trainer with expertise in this area as we did in 2014.

- Utilize mentor classrooms more effectively to model, especially for newer staff, ways to incorporate reading and writing into all parts of the daily routine. Film these practices to use in new employees’ Professional Development.

- Place additional emphasis on creative teaching strategies for literacy skills such as reading, writing, and phonological awareness by providing monthly tips and lesson ideas in Staff Memos.

- Utilize available professional development resources to supplement in-house trainings on early childhood science content. Professional development in the form of teacher workshops are currently underway with educators from the Whitaker Center for Science, and will be conducted with about %85 of teaching staff this year.

- Utilize coaching to strengthen Early Head Start home visitor’s skills in planning with parent input and identifying family strengths to support individual child development.

- Utilize Ready Rosie parenting resources to offer facilitated workshops for parents around literacy,