



# 2018 - 2019 HRA Head Start Annual Report



Rocco R. Tricarico, JD Executive Director

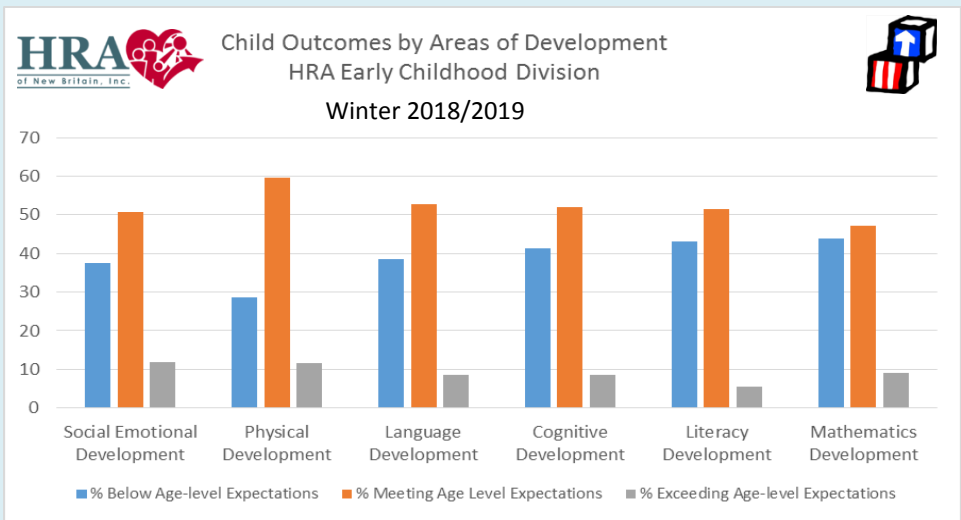
Dr. Catherine R. Baratta, Board President



# 2018 – 2019 HRA HEAD START/SCHOOL READINESS ANNUAL REPORT

We collect assessment data for every child enrolled in our early childhood programs at three checkpoints throughout the year. The data collected this year has shown an improvement of nearly 20% in all areas of development of students moving from below age-level expectations to meeting or exceeding age-level expectations. The greatest improvements from the Fall to Winter assessment periods were seen in the physical and mathematics domain. As in previous years, physical development continues to be the area demonstrating the greatest strength. The large improvement has been seen in the mathematics domain can be attributed to an increased awareness of mathematics objectives and improvements in the implementation of intentional teaching experiences provided to students.

We also break down our data into separate charts for children entering kindergarten (4 year olds) and children who are not yet entering kindergarten (3 year olds) because their developmental outcomes tend to vary. However, mathematics development is the weakest area across both age groups. The three year olds need the most improvement in the domains of language, literacy and mathematics development while the four year olds need the most improvement in the domains of mathematics, language and cognitive development



The data in the above chart is a Teaching Strategies Gold “snapshot” report, converted from the report’s table into a bar graph to compare the 7 areas of development. These results indicate the three areas that need the most improvement are Mathematics, Language and Cognitive Development

### Child Assessment System:

The management and teaching team observe and assess the development of our children at three check points during the program year using Teaching Strategies GOLD. This is an observational assessment that links our curriculum to our lesson planning. By analyzing data and evaluating outcomes, teachers develop learning experience plans to achieve school readiness goals.



### Key Findings from Child Assessment Data:

HRA Head Start uses an individualized observation and planning process for each child. Staff and families assess each child’s development and identify areas for improvement across all domains of learning. The management and teaching team obtain information from parent interviews, child observations, Teaching Strategies Gold and if applicable, from the child’s Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

**647 pre-school aged children are better prepared to start kindergarten after participating in HRA’s Head Start Program of Excellence.**

## HRA HEAD START LEADERSHIP ANNOUNCEMENTS

We're pleased to welcome our new Assistant Director, Denise Dionizio, and Nutrition Consultant, Patricia Shoemaker, R.D. Denise brings a wealth of experience in early childhood development having held various leadership roles in infant, toddler, pre-school and school age children programs. Patricia brings over 30 years of experience in the field with the most recent 15 years in school nutrition.



HEAD START PROGRAMS FISCAL YEAR 16-17	P/Y	FY17 Total	Funding							
			Fed HS	State HS	School Readiness	USDA	Fees	Other Programs	Other Revenue	In-Kind
Salaries	2,373,089.00	2,366,539	1,478,098	225,908	591,608	11,460	59,465	-	-	-
Benefits	784,787.00	817,417	511,842	76,940	203,718	3,855	21,062	-	-	-
Travel and Transportation	107,773.00	104,010	104,010	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Supplies	111,269.00	46,733	34,055	2,911	7,444	2,323	-	-	-	-
Contractual	535,757.00	553,805	131,946	33,853	102,374	285,632	-	-	-	-
Other Expenses	753,493.00	848,089	356,731	46,845	149,332	27,666	-	-	-	267,515
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,666,168</b>	<b>4,736,593</b>	<b>2,616,682</b>	<b>386,457</b>	<b>1,054,476</b>	<b>330,936</b>	<b>80,527</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>267,515</b>
Prior year		4,666,168	2,569,907	414,445	1,053,118	358,031	66,011	-	-	204,656

### HRA Head Start Federal Review and Audit Results:

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) determined that HRA's Head Start Program is in total compliance, placing the program in a five year grant cycle. Recipients of five year grants must now complete certain requirements in each of these required areas; governance and leadership, health and safety, school readiness and the audit process within an established time frame.

## HRA HEAD START LEADERSHIP ANNOUNCEMENTS

We're sad to see our Health and Safety Manager, **Joan Pina**, retire after 47 years with our program. Joan's tireless efforts and passion throughout the years have been invaluable to our Early Childhood Education Program and to our community. We will miss her but we are thrilled to see her begin the next chapter in her life.



### HRA Head Start Health, Dental, Nutrition and Mental Services:

HRA's Head Start Program is committed to promoting our children's social, emotional and medical well-being and has formed a number of collaborations to achieve this. By working with local medical and dental providers, we ensure that families are completing their annual well-child visits and dental exams. Our Family Service Workers work with the families to make sure that all enrolled children establish a medical and dental home; receive their physical and dental exams; and do necessary follow-up in a timely matter. Tunxis Community College's Allied Dental Program visits all classrooms to deliver oral health education each spring. The University of Connecticut (UConn) Speech and Language and Audiology Department completes required hearing screenings for all enrolled children within 45 days. The Connecticut Lions Eyes Research Foundation, Lions Eye Health Program conducts vision screening for all the enrolled children with 45 days. Our nutrition consultant adheres to the CACFP guidelines for preparing nutritious and healthy menus and develops care plans for children who have food allergies and restrictions. Parents receive copies of monthly menus for breakfast, lunches and snacks and My Plate recipes. The New Britain Roots Mobile Farmer's Market stops weekly at HRA from July – November with local fruits and vegetables for sale. Our contract with Wheeler Clinic provides us with a full-time Behavioral Specialist.

**What Our Parents Say: The NAEYC Family survey indicates that the Satisfaction Rate for our childcare programs is 96.21%**



**NAEYC Accreditation:** In February 2018 HRA's program team demonstrated its' dedication and commitment to continuous quality improvement by successfully completing the renewal process for the NAEYC Accreditation of Early Learning Programs. NAEYC commended the program for its outstanding efforts. To achieve NAEYC Accreditation, a program must: meet at least 80% of assessed criteria for each of these 10 program standards. HRA's Early Childhood Education Program exceeded this in all areas of assessment criteria.

STANDARD	HRA'S PASS RATE
Relationships	100%
Curriculum	97%
Teaching	100%
Assessment of Child Progress	100+%
Health	100+%
Teachers	100+%
Families	100+%
Community Relationships	100+%
Physical Environment	100%
Leadership & Management	100+%

**Social-Emotional Development:** Children will develop the skills necessary to foster secure attachments with adults, maintain healthy relationships, regulate behavior and emotions, and develop a healthy concept of personal identity. Children will participate fully in learning experiences and form positive relationships with teachers and peers.

**Approaches to Learning:** Children will develop a sense of wonder; a willingness to participate; persistence in their efforts; and the ability to connect past learning to new situations.



**Literacy-Language Development:**

Children will increase their language and communication skills by engaging in meaningful experiences that require them to effectively express their ideas and feelings, to listen and to understand others. They will understand basic concepts about books, media, the alphabet, and letter-sound relationships.

**Physical Health and Development:** Children will develop early health habits to support physical well-being, use of their bodies, muscle control, appropriate nutrition, exercise, hygiene and safety practices.

**Cognitive/General Knowledge:** Children will develop mathematical thinking skills to logically solve problems and make connections to the world around them. Children will expand their curiosity and motivation to learn by asking questions, making observations and building on natural experiences.

**189 families have affordable child care so they can get or keep a job – and do so with ease, knowing their children are safe while they are at work - in HRA's NAEYC accredited Toddler and Preschool Child Care Program.**

**Preparing Children for Kindergarten:** HRA Head Start uses The Creative Curriculum for Preschool as its principal curriculum. This curriculum is aligned with the goals in the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework and is a guide for teachers to provide materials and activities that support children's goals. The Creative Curriculum for Preschool meets all of the standards for effective early childhood curricula by the National Association for the Education of Young Children and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education.

A team of teachers and administrators, with input from parents, developed HRA's Head Start School Readiness Goals. They used the following resources to lead the development process; Connecticut Early Learning Development Standards; Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework; National Association for the Education of Young Children Standards and Criteria; Creative Curriculum for Preschool; and Teaching Strategies GOLD. Family Engagement goals are incorporated into the School Readiness goals.

**Transition Activities:** Head Start implemented a variety of kindergarten transition activities in the program and in conjunction with community providers and the local Board of Education. These activities prepare children, their parents and school staff for the children's entry into Kindergarten. Head Start management and staff provides:

- Developmental narratives for elementary school staff
- Kindergarten informational meeting to give parents resources and a registration tip sheet
- Registration packets to all parents of eligible kindergarten age children
- Staff support for parents who need help completing registration materials
- Activities using children's books and discussion about the "Kindergarten Here I Come" video.
- *Kindergarten Café:* Informational event in collaboration with the local Board of Ed to help families prepare for Kindergarten.
- Orientation visits at elementary schools for incoming children and their parents in late August.

