

Policy Council Approved: 10/15/2026

Board Approved: 10/28/2026

Introduction

For 60 years, the Community Action Council of Howard County (CAC) has served as the county's federally designated non-profit anti-poverty organization. As part of a nationwide network of Community Action Agencies, CAC helps hard-working individuals and families overcome economic challenges and achieve lasting self-sufficiency.

CAC delivers impact through five core service areas:

- Early Childhood Education (including Early Head Start, Head Start, and MSDE-funded Pre-K)
- Food Assistance (at CAC's Howard County Food Bank, Community Gardens, and Partner Pantries)
- Housing Assistance
- Energy Assistance
- Weatherization Assistance

CAC's Early Childhood Education Program (ECE) is comprised of Head Start, Early Head Start and state funded Prekindergarten classrooms. For 25-26 SY, the ECE Program had a funded capacity to provide 236 children ages 6 weeks through 5 years old with high-quality academic programming and unique enrichment experiences. Federal funding, supplemental funds from private community-based organizations, local government, and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) support extension of full-day services for each of five Early Childhood Education Centers located throughout Howard County. Services also include a Summer Enrichment Program component that extends learning, enrichment, and support services for seven weeks during the summer months creating a year-round program for all eligible students. Additionally, CAC's ECE Program offers Before and After Care Services for eligible parents/guardians that allow them to pursue their own career and/or education goals.

Each of CAC's five Early Childhood Education Centers is licensed and accredited by the MSDE and the National Association of Educators of Young Children (NAEYC). Additionally, all locations have been awarded and maintain the highest Maryland Excels rating of 5, with the newest location on track to receive a rating of 5 by the end of the 26-27 SY.

Methodology

On-Going Process for Program Improvement

CAC's Early Childhood Education Program develops, and modifies, Program and School Readiness Goals, Objectives, and Target Outcomes using a year-round self-assessment model. This model results in data-informed revisions to Program and School Readiness Goals that are responsive to the needs of students, families and staff. An annual Program Project Plan with specific goals, strategies, timelines, and related accountability is prepared based on data from the following:

- Community Needs
- Head Start Self-Assessment
- CAC's Strategic Plan
- Head Start Grant Requirements
- Head Start Program Goals
- Head Start School Readiness Goals
- Monitoring and analysis of monthly, quarterly, and yearly reports

Progress is monitored throughout the year by the CAC's ECE Leadership Team, Policy Council and the CAC Board of Directors. Monitoring activities include review of monthly and quarterly reports including data and progress, onsite reviews of licensing and Head Start standards compliance, supervision, file reviews, client surveys and staff surveys.

2025-26 Head Start Annual Self-Assessment Day

The 2025-26 Head Start Annual Self-Assessment Day was held in person on Thursday, June 11, 2026, from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm. A total of 20+ individuals representing CAC and ECE staff, Head Start Policy Council, and a robust set community partners participated in the event held in collaboration with the Howard County Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC). Over the course of the session, participants reviewed program and community data, engaged in thoughtful data-driven discussion, and suggested revisions to objectives and strategies to ensure continued progress toward established goals for the 2026-27 School Year. This year's Assessment Day Goals were to use data-informed decision making and stakeholder feedback to review and revise if appropriate program and school readiness goals.

Detailed data relevant to the following areas of focus Education; Family and Community Engagement; and Health and Mental Health was reviewed. Opportunities for feedback were provided to shape forward facing program goals and focus areas for objectives.

2025-26 Head Start Program and Performance Data

Enrollment Data

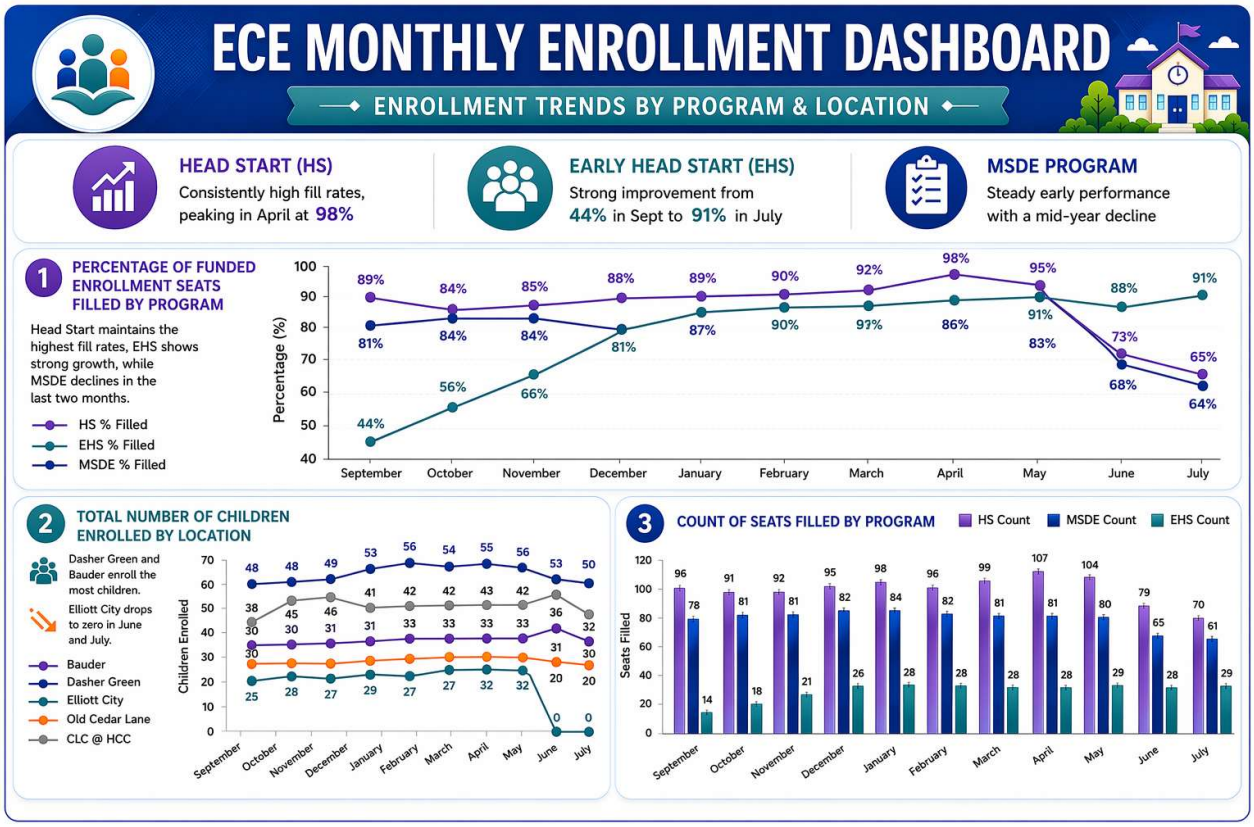
The Community Action Council of Howard County, MD Inc Early Childhood Education Program had 236 funded enrollment seats across 3 programs for the 25-26 SY.

Funded Enrollment Slots by Location

CENTER	FUNDED EARLY HEAD START SLOTS	FUNDED HEAD START SLOTS	FUNDED MSDE BLUEPRINT SLOTS	TOTAL FUNDED SLOTS
Ellicott City	N/A	34	0	34
Bauder Education Center	9 (10)	18	20	48
Old Cedar Lane	N/A	18	20	38
Dasher Green	N/A	38	20	58
The Children's Learning Center @HCC	21 (22)	0	36	58
TOTAL	32	108	96	236

*Numbers in parentheses represent pending group size waiver for 2-year-old classrooms submitted in April 2026.

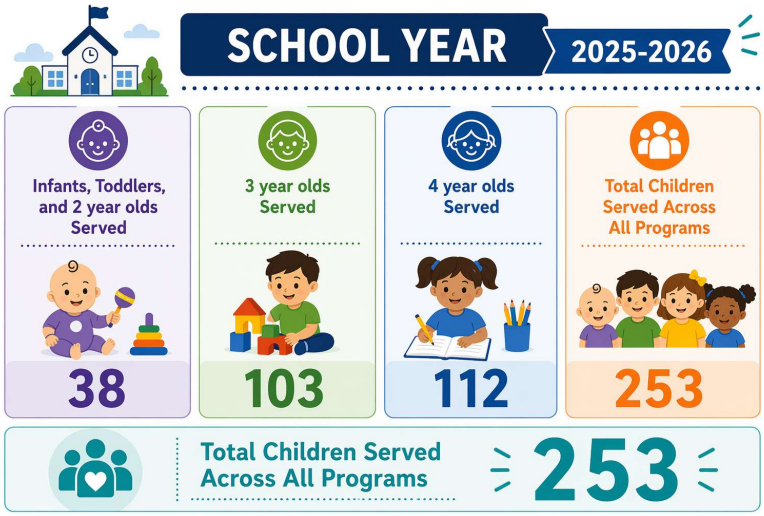
Monthly Enrollment Data



Note: The Ellicott City site was closed as of the start of the Summer Enrichment Program (Summer 2026) to allow for renovations. Children in need of summer programming were redirected to the Dasher Green location.

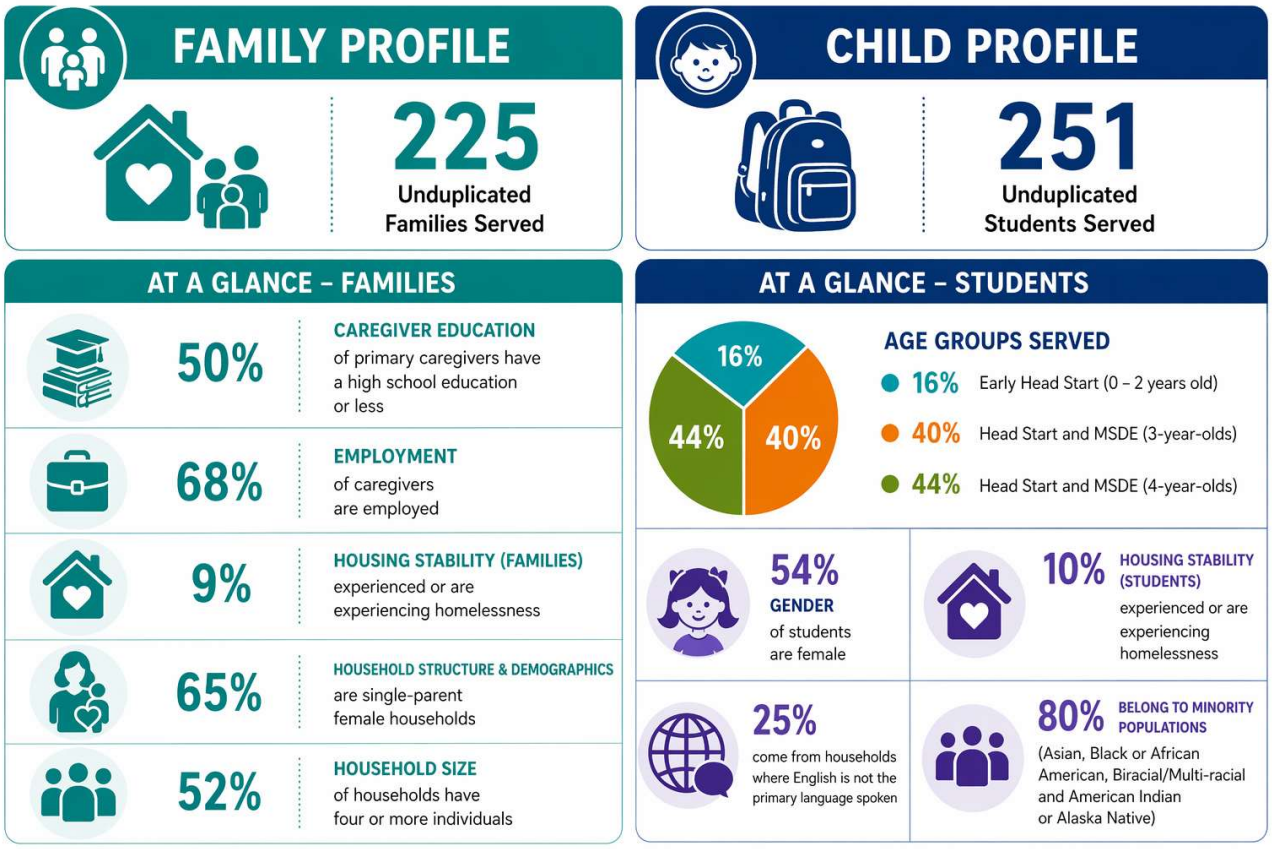
Children and Families Served

In total**, 253 children** were served in these funded slots across Head Start, MSDE Blueprint and Early Head Start Programs.



Family and Child Demographics

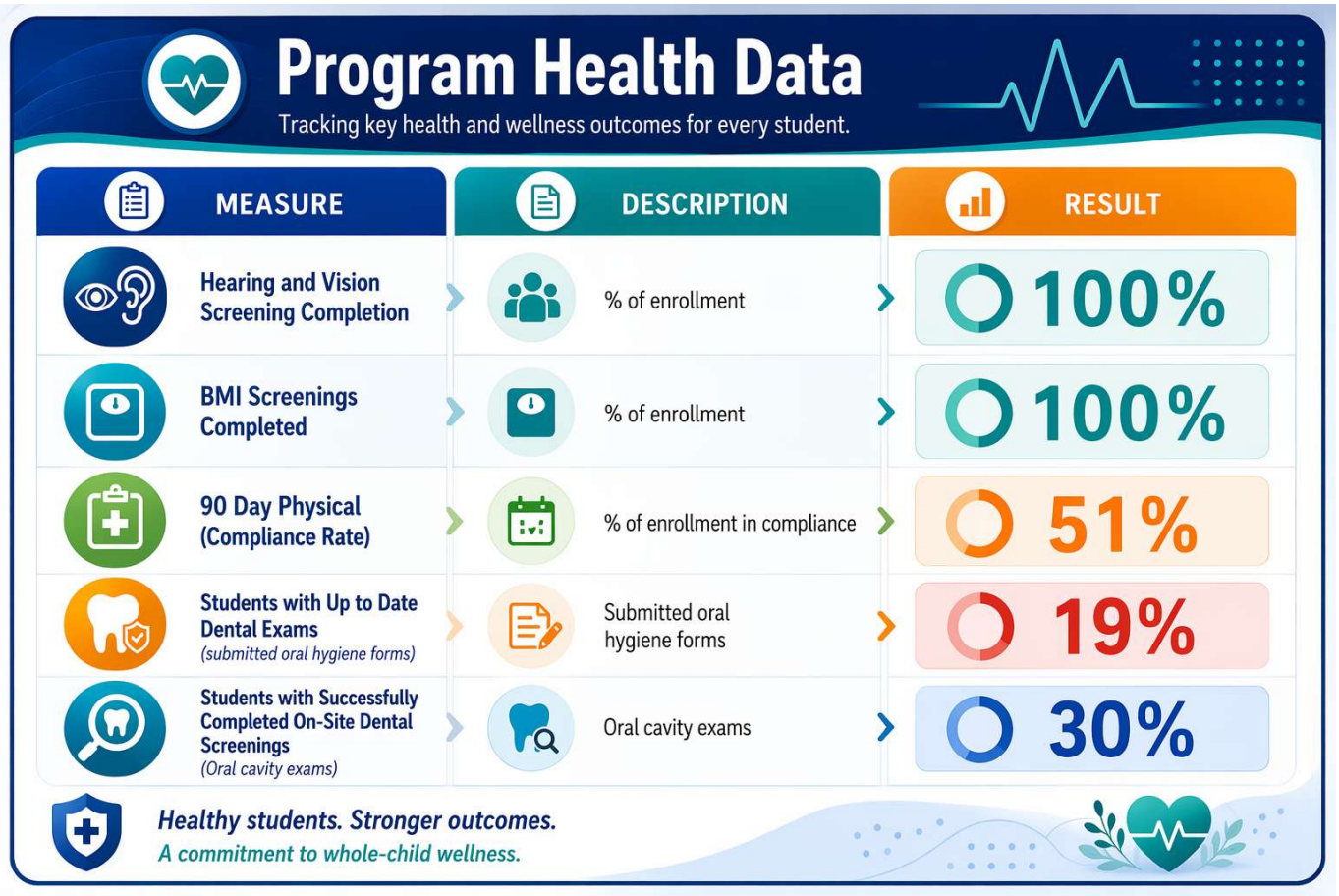
The children served came from a total of **225 families.** The demographics below detail the profile of the students and families served.



Two students were served in both Head Start and MSDE programs during the school year (253). All demographic statistics, except for the number of students served in each Program, capture the* ***unduplicated count of 251 students served.*

Health Services Data

Enrolled children are provided with comprehensive screenings for physical, oral, developmental, hearing, and vision health, ensuring early identification and follow-up for any concerns. Families are supported with accessing preventive care, routine health monitoring, as well as maintaining medical and dental homes. Nutrition is a key component. Healthy meals, snacks, and nutrition education support growth and establish lifelong healthy habits.



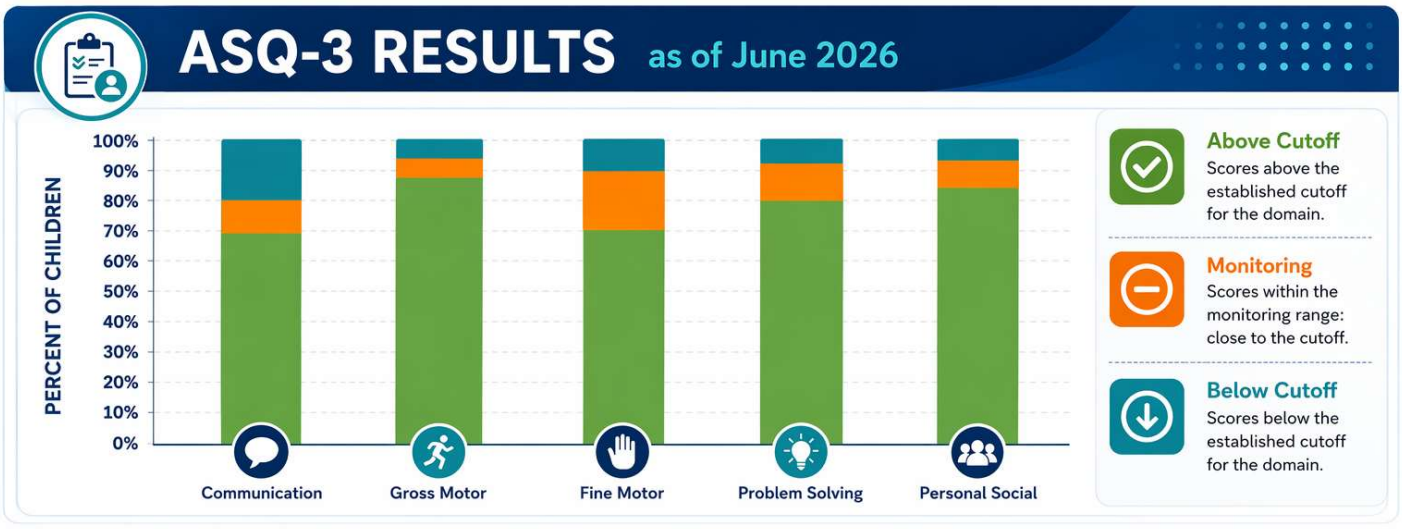
Education and Student Outcomes Data

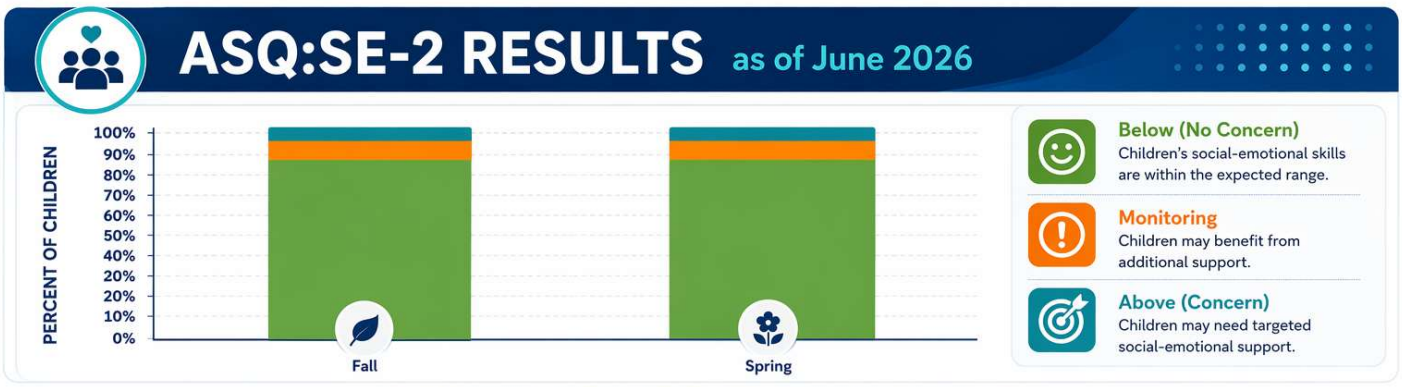
Student Screening Data

Children aged 2-4 years old are provided with developmental screening during their first 45 days of enrollment to determine whether they are meeting key developmental milestones and to detect possible delays. CAC uses the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3) to complete this screening and identify students for intervention and/or further evaluation.

Gross motor skills continue to be an area of strength. However, over the course of the last two school years, personal social skills have also emerged as an area of strength. Children are arriving in the educational setting and ready to learn and demonstrate developmentally appropriate social-emotional skills. Communication continues to be the area of greatest concern.

The Ages and Stages Questionnaire- Social Emotional (ASQ:SE-2) is administered twice per year for children aged 2-4 years old. While there was a slight increase from Fall to Spring for children in the monitoring range, overall, less than 10% of children fell in the range for concern at and point during the program year.

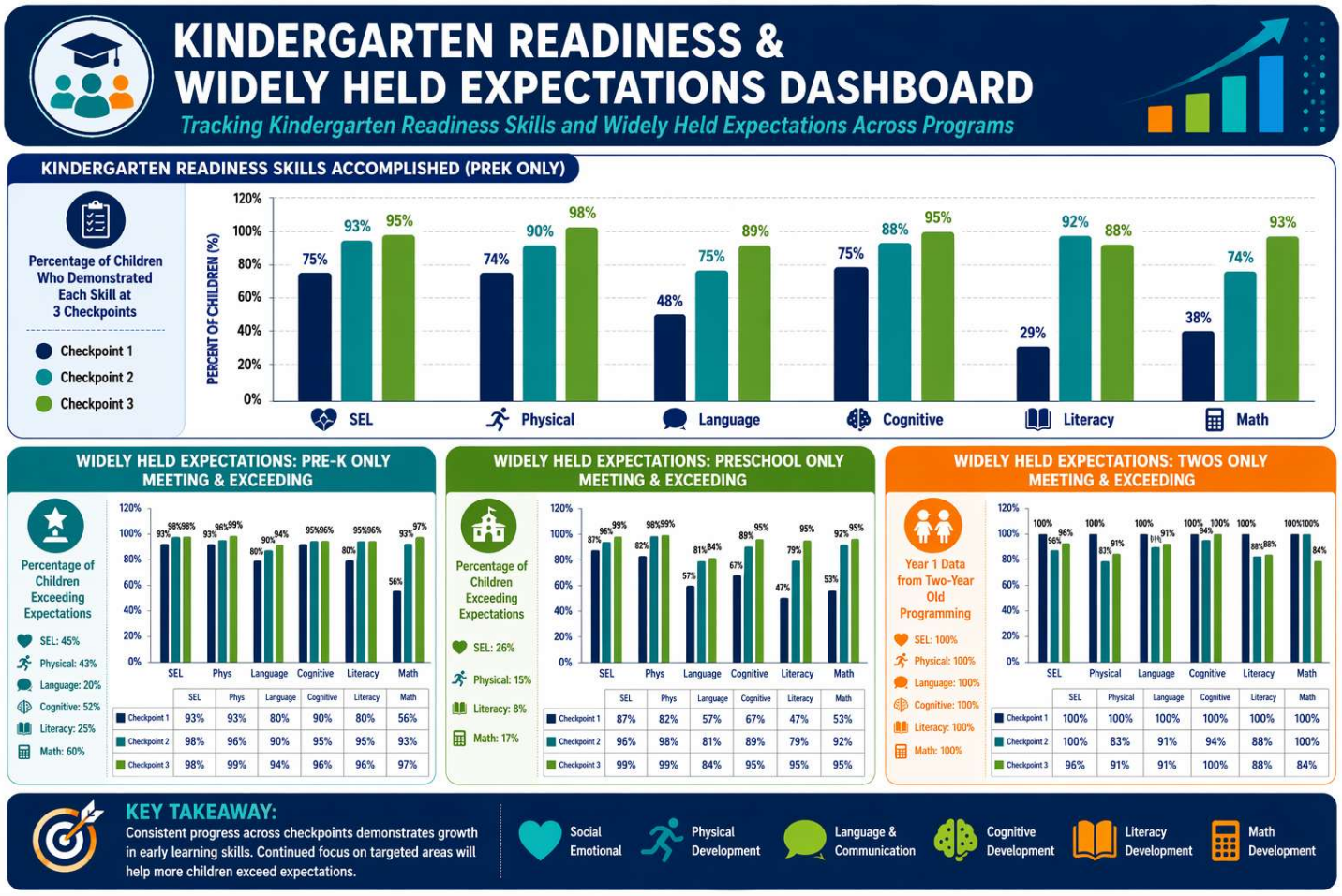




Note: ASQ-3 assesses developmental domains. ASQ:SE-2 assesses social-emotional skills.

Kindergarten Readiness and Educational Outcomes Data

Children are assessed three times per year, as well as through the summer on their educational progress. CAC uses the Teaching Strategies GOLD formative assessment based on widely held expectations for their developmental age. Students heading to kindergarten are also measured on their readiness to transition to kindergarten levels of skill.



Interventions and Students with Exceptionalities

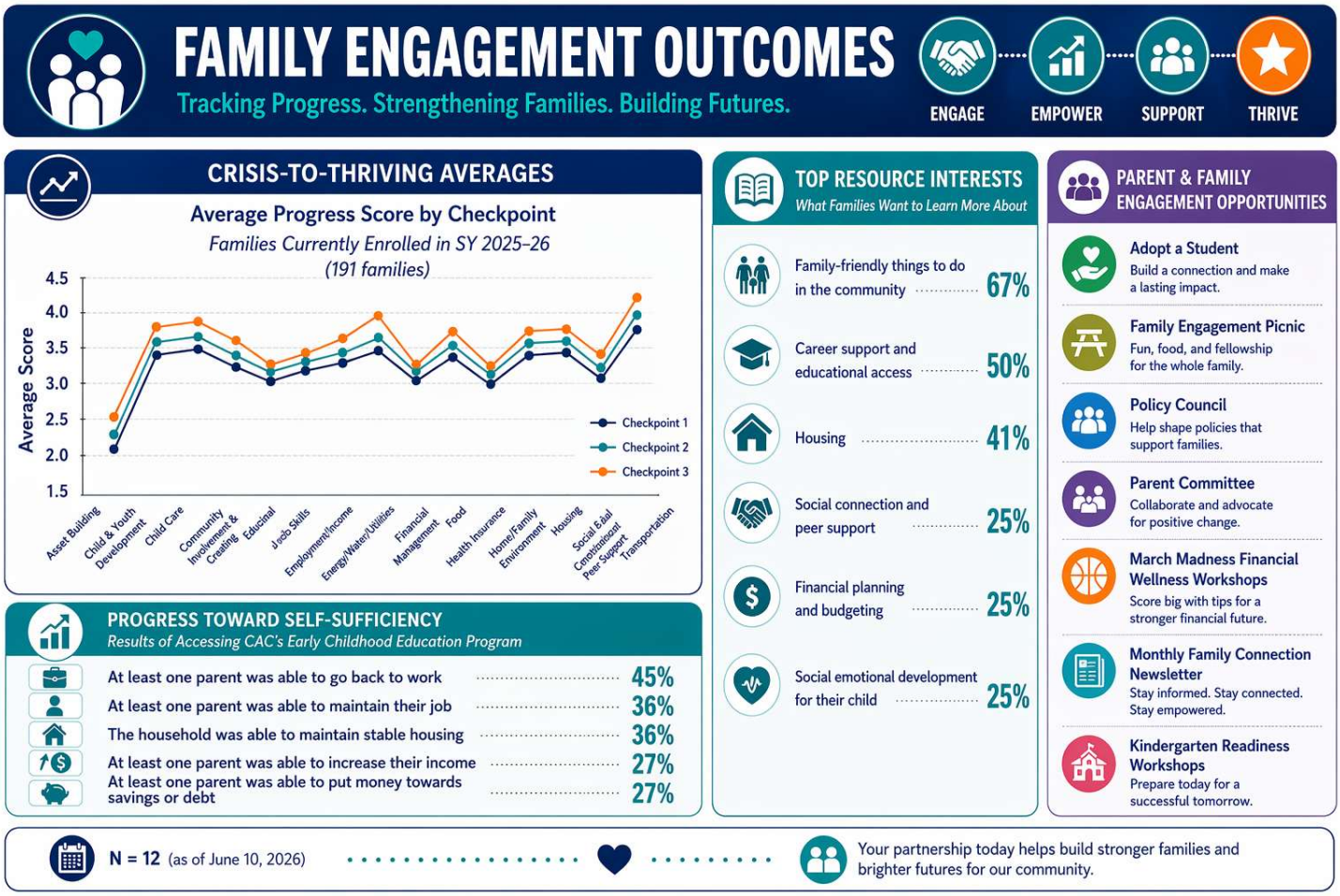
CAC employs a wide range of intervention and support strategies for students both identified with exceptionalities, as well as those in the intervention and Child Find process. Children with exceptionalities eligible for IDEA services receive services delivered by HCPSS. This includes a variety of settings including half day services, full day services, and services delivered at the child's ECE site.



Family Engagement Programming

Family Engagement is an important part of the Head Start program model. Families are assessed using the Crisis to Thriving Scale, with progress periodically reported regarding family goals. Throughout the program year, family engagement opportunities are provided aligned with the PFCE framework. Activities include case management and access to parenting curriculum, opportunities to build social capital, leadership skills through engagement in Parent Committees and Policy Council. Additionally, workshops are held with community partners to support families in key areas such as financial planning, budgeting etc.

The data below outlines family progress data using the crisis to thriving measure, as well as self-reported progress parents have experienced because of enrollment in CAC's Early Childhood Education Program.

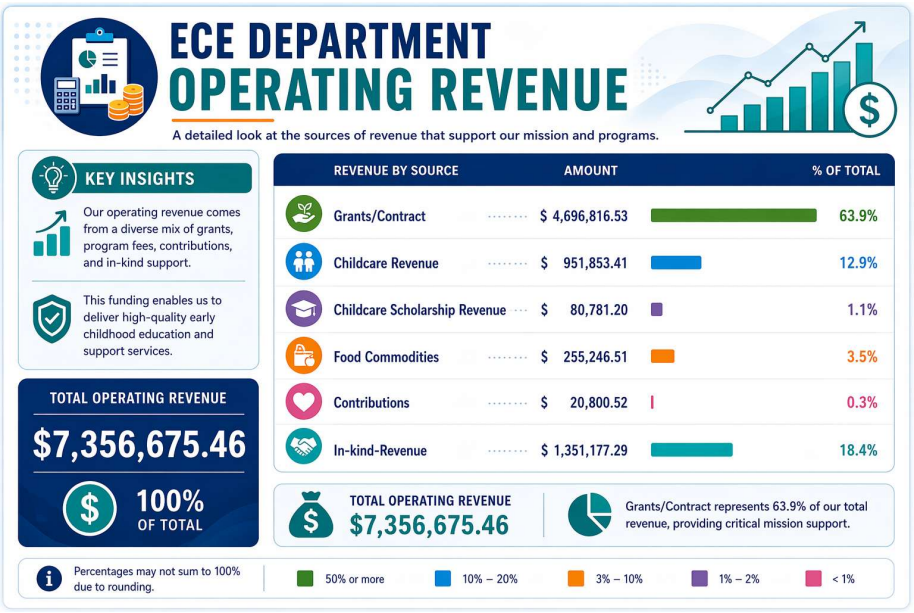


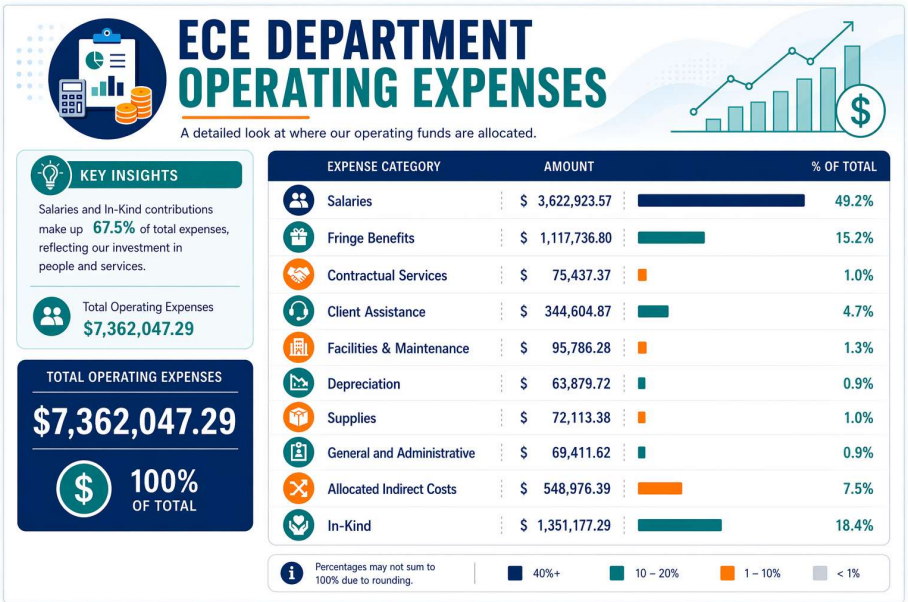
Financial Performance

Results from the Most Recent Financial Audit

The annual independent audit of the Community Action Council of Howard County, MD, Inc. (CAC) for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2025, was conducted by Smith Elliott Kearns & Company, LLC. The firm issued an unqualified (unmodified) opinion, indicating that CAC's financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the organization's financial position as of June 30, 2025, and the changes in its net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

A copy of the audit report is available for public viewing upon request at CAC's office, located at 9820 Patuxent Woods Drive, Columbia, MD 21046. CAC's IRS Form 990 is also available for viewing upon request at the same address.





2025-26 Head Start Self-Assessment Surveys

In preparation for the Self-Assessment Day, six electronic surveys were distributed in May 2026 to key stake holders including the CAC Board of Directors, CAC Policy Council, CAC staff, and select community partners. The surveys were developed in alignment with key service areas of the Head Start performance standards captured relevant insights into CAC's ability to implement and deliver a high-quality early childhood education Head Start Program. Each of the four surveys included Program Design, Management and Quality Improvement combined with Fiscal Infrastructure, and Family and Community Engagement Services combined with ERSEA.

Survey Response Rate and Data Insights

- 70 total surveys sent
- 43% response rate
- Across the four (4) surveys there was a total of 38 quantitative questions and 12 qualitative questions
- We sent out a stakeholder feedback form after the Self-Assessment Day meeting with qualitative questions on each of our three focus area topics: Education, Health/Mental Health and Family & Community Engagement.

Program Survey Key Insights

Program Design, Management, & Quality Improvement

Strengths	Opportunities
A strength related to Program Design is the **Wraparound Service of Before and After Care.**	The Before and After Care Program response to the MSDE CCS's freeze on scholarships and the **implementation of the tuition-based version of scholarship to continue to offer BAC to families that are in need.**
The program is **constantly evolving and finding ways to become more efficient** and make things more streamline.	**Strengthen partnerships and supports for MLL families.** It would be helpful to have translator options more readily available for families at events and on a daily basis.
A key strength of the Head Start program is its **commitment to continuous improvement through the use of data, monitoring, and regular reporting.** Program leadership provides the Board and Policy Council with information that supports informed decision-making and accountability. The program also demonstrates a strong commitment to serving children and families through comprehensive educational, health, family engagement, and support services. In addition, staff and leadership appear **committed to maintaining compliance while focusing on positive outcomes for children and school readiness.**	An opportunity for improvement is to continue **strengthening the use of outcome data to demonstrate the long-term impact of services on children and families**. Additional emphasis on sharing **trends, performance measures, and success stories** with the Board and community could further support strategic decision-making and program advocacy. Continued efforts to enhance family engagement, staff development, and cross-program collaboration will help ensure the program **remains responsive to changing community needs and continues to deliver high-quality services.**
Several times a year the Director of ECE shares kindergarten readiness, widely held expectations and other **measures of student progress with the board to ensure appropriate oversight for programming goals and performance.**	The program design, management and quality improvement is strong, but with adjustments for **private pay options for Howard County families' comparison data for Head Start learners will grow**.
Regular updates using student performance data on student progress on multiple key performance measures.	A recent update regarding a needed policy change/update that that would **assure compliance with the use of appropriate interventions as related to their IEP. These types of details matter.**
Determined needs of the community and **adjusted accordingly** to support early head start slots vs historical head start slots	regularly working on process and system enhancements through a continuous improvement initiative. **Finding the most impactful processes and removing the manual or duplicative elements and streamlining where possible.**

Education and Child Development

Strengths	Opportunities
The ECE program holds all required **accreditations**.	**More time for special services** for the children who need it.
Classroom teachers **intentionally plan learning experiences** that support children's development across all domains, including social-emotional development, physical development, language and literacy, cognitive development and math. Lesson plans connect curriculum activities to learning objectives. **Ongoing documentation and data** are used to individualize instruction and monitor progress for each child.	**Continued professional development opportunities** can help ensure staff has the knowledge and skills needed to effectively support children's development and progress toward school readiness goals.
Individualized plans- Inclusive practices	**Continued monthly trainings** for teachers and support staff in all developmental areas. Continued services with speech pathologists, HS Mental Health Services and Offices of Children and Families.
Teachers use **creative, fun, imaginative** and hands on learning opportunities to support the curriculum.	**Dual -Language Programming**
Teachers are provided with professional development and ample resources to support instruction.	**Continued practice with reviewing "what does the data tell us"** As teachers plan for individual children.
Teachers receive **immense amounts of professional development** and have access to many resources to support their teaching practices. Additionally, there are positive relationships with HCPSS through the special education specialist which helps support children who need additional services.	We are **able to offer Speech services** as well as coordinated by our Special Education Specialist
We have the opportunity to offer **supports through our Special Education Specialist for in class support as well as referrals.**	There are still **opportunities to support children and families who are MLL as well as our newest EHS families.**
There is a c**ollaborative approach with specialists and teaching staff to create inclusive and developmentally appropriate classrooms.** Staff at Dasher Green work with management and specialists to manage all behaviors present and **change practices/strategies based on the child's needs.**	More home-based **services for parents to implement social emotional strengthening.**
We **meet children where they are and take into consideration the knowledge, they bring with them and work from there to expand their development**	

Health Services

Strengths	Opportunities
The children and families **receive important information about their child's health and development on a regular basis**. This information is shared in family newsletters consistently.	There could be **quarterly (or a different time period) unannounced health checks completed by members of the team to observe tooth brushing, mealtime, etc. procedures in the classrooms** to ensure policies and procedures are being adhered to daily.
Our program does a strong job supporting children's health by ensuring up-to-date health screening, and dental checks. We also **promote healthy habits** through daily routines such as handwashing, nutrition meals and physical activity. In addition, staff **communicate regularly with families about children's health needs** and provide resources when concerns arise, which helps support the whole child.	Much of the maintenance is in response to a problem, rather than preventative. If a topic is seasonal (ex. putting up the sunshades on the playground), it could be **scheduled in advance** rather than responding to requests.
One of our program's strengths has been our **offering of health screenings.** We screen all student's BMIs and hearing and vision and offer dental screenings to all students. We provide **dental education to all students in the program.**	One area to grow is helping families **better understand and access health services by sharing more simple information, reminders, and support when referrals are made.**
The health services manager consistently makes herself available to families to follow up on topics related to health and nutrition.	One opportunity for improvement is with the **collection of updated physical and dental exams.**

Family and Community Engagement

Strengths	Opportunities
The family engagement team **builds strong relationships with their families.** The way they really earn the trust of our families makes it easier for all of us to have conversations around goals, education, health, etc.	We have an opportunity to clearly **identify tasks and roles for education staff vs. CSS staff when the child is transitioning** from EHS to HS or from one classroom to the next.
When the students are transitioning to kindergarten, our CSSs inform the families which elementary school they will attend, **promote kindergarten registration, and readiness.**	We have an **opportunity to make the application digital to speed up the process.**

Enrollment, Recruitment, Selection, Engagement, and Attendance (ERSEA)

Strengths	Opportunities
ERSEA **selections are a collaborative process.** The committee meets twice a month to review vacancies and make selections as needed. The **process is transparent.**	

Strategic Planning for Program Improvement

After reviewing the above Key Findings from the Head Start Self-Assessment Surveys, Data Committee Reports, and Program and Family Outcome Data, the progress on program goals for the 25-26 SY was reported as follows:

Education Program Goals

Program Goal	Objectives	June Goal Outcome
Students will show growth across domains and objectives as demonstrated by checkpoints and frequent documentation on TS GOLD.	85% of students will show growth in at least four domains by checkpoint three; growth will be maintained as measured by checkpoint four.	This goal has been met and will be monitored through the end of the summer 2026 program.
	90% of children will have one or more pieces of documentation for focus objectives at each checkpoint period. Documentation includes student-specific observation and artifact entry.	

Program Goal	Objectives	June Goal Outcome
Teachers will demonstrate growth or continue in the areas of curriculum implementation and quality teacher-child interactions as reflected by CLASS indicators and Pyramid Model Practices.	By the end of the program year, all Preschool and PreK classrooms within each ECE center will meet or exceed competitive threshold scores for all CLASS domains.	This goal has been met. All preschool and PreK classrooms were evaluated meet or exceed the competitive thresholds identified.
	Center managers and ECE specialists will evaluate individuals and classroom teaching teams by conducting two formal CLASS observations and/or, monthly classroom observations, weekly lesson plan reviews, curriculum fidelity checks, and coaching plans.	This goal has been met. All classrooms including Early Head Start received ongoing classroom observations. Early Head Start classrooms received CLASS observations for informational and training purposes, as these age groups were new this program year.

Family & Community Engagement Program Goals

Program Goal	Objectives	June Goal Outcome
Increase enrollment percentages up to full enrollment based on funding and slot availability.	By the end of the program year, reach full enrollment in Head Start and Early Head Start classrooms, as well as 85% enrollment in other available seats.	Head Start achieved full enrollment (greater than 97%) in May 2026. All Early Head Start classrooms were open and operating as of October 2025. Early Head Start achieved 91% enrollment with 29/32 seats filled. The program is currently awaiting approval of a local design option waiver for group sizes regarding children ages 24-26 months. MSDE Blueprint PreK seats achieved 85% enrollment with 82/96 opened seats filled.
By the end of the program year, service integration metrics will ensure the maximum number of families are taking advantage of all CAC eligible programs.	By the end of the program year, the Family Engagement Team will support families in accessing CAC resources by meeting or exceeding service integration metrics.	CAC continues to monitor service integration metrics and maximize the number of families access other CAC programs and resources (if they meet qualifying eligibility requirements).
Design a relevant and engaging family engagement program.	By the end of the program year, 75% of enrolled families have engaged in at least one family engagement event or opportunity as measured by event exit tickets.	This goal has been met. Families engaged in a variety of opportunities throughout the school year.
	By the end of the program year, the team will have offered and engaged enrolled families in a parenting curriculum.	During the program year, all Client Services Specialists for Family Engagement were trained in the Parents as Teachers Curriculum. Client Services Specialists access these resources when providing case management to families.

Health & Mental Health Program Goals

Program Goal	Objectives	June Goal Outcome
Introduce family resources to better educate families on healthy eating and cooking habits with the goal of reducing obesity risk factors among children and families.	Continue nutrition education through various channels: Nutrition Consultation, the Local Health Improvement Coalition, and CAC's Howard County Food Bank.	This goal has been met. CAC has offered nutrition consultation to families, as well as provides access to the Food Bank and food pantries.
Continue access in the school setting to physical and overall health resources/screening.	Create an improved tracking system for hearing screenings by partnering with CAC's Technology Team and trouble-shooting the limitations of CAP60.	This goal has been met and remains ongoing in order to support the overall health and well-being of children in our care.
	Health team will coordinate continuation of biennial oral cavity screenings in conjunction with hygienists from Chase Brexton. Health Team will continue with daily tooth brushing in classrooms.	
	The Health Team will coordinate continuation of annual hearing and vision screenings and biennial BMI screenings during the school year cycle.	
Enhance education for families on mental health resources to support a better understanding of appropriate child social, emotional, and mental development.	Provide Mental and Behavioral health resources to parents through monthly contributions to the Family Connection, Classroom Newsletters, and CAC Social Media Platforms.	This goal remains continuously in progress. New for the 25-26 SY, CAC introduced the Family Connection Newsletter. This highlighted monthly the many, many offerings available with both CAC and community partners to support family health, education and well-being.

School Readiness Goals: Head Start & Prekindergarten

Additionally, school readiness goals for the 2026-27 School Program Year were updated as follows:

Math, Cognition, & Early Steam

Domain	Math, Cognition and Early STEAM
Goal (BROAD)	Children transitioning from the CAC Early Childhood Education program will use math and science concepts to observe, collect information, problem solve, describe, and understand the world around them.
Objective (SMART)	By the end of the 2026-2027 program year, Pre-K students will demonstrate an ability to count verbally at 85% proficiency. Students will verbally count to twenty.
Objective (SMART)	By the end of the 2026-2027 program year, Preschool students will demonstrate the ability to connect numerals with their quantities at 85% proficiency.

Approaches to Learning

Domain	Approaches to Learning
Goal (BROAD)	Children will demonstrate positive approaches to learning through persistence, engagement, problem solving, curiosity, and flexibility.
Objective (SMART)	By the end of the 2026-2027 program year, both Preschool and Pre-K students will demonstrate a positive approach to learning through persistence at 90% proficiency. Preschool students will willingly practice an activity many times until successful and Pre-K students will plan and pursue a variety of appropriately challenging tasks.

Language and Communication

Domain	Language and Communication
Goal (BROAD)	Children transitioning from the CAC Early Childhood Education program will have expressive communication skills with increasing conventional grammar and be able to communicate needs and ideas. Multilingual learners will be supported in the acquisition of the English language with varied strategies and value of the home language.
Objective (SMART)	By the end of the 2026-2027 program year, preschool students will demonstrate the ability to engage in conversations at 85% proficiency. Students will attend to brief conversations of 2-3 exchanges. Multilingual learners will be supported with the use of visuals and targeted vocabulary in their home language.

Domain	Language and Communication
Objective (SMART)	By the end of the 2026-2027 school year, PreK students will demonstrate the ability to speak clearly at 85% proficiency. Students will be understood by most people, only mispronouncing new or long/unusual words. Multilingual learners will receive supports of visuals and targeted vocabulary in their home language.

Literacy

Domain	Literacy
Goal (BROAD)	Children transitioning from the CAC Early Childhood Education program will develop expressive communication skills to foster participation in conversations and the ability to provide details about events in the past and present. Children will develop phonological and phoneme awareness to progress reading readiness skills. Multilingual learners will receive targeted support in using vocabulary from both their home language and the English language.
Objective (SMART)	By the end of the 2026-2027 program year, all students will write to convey ideas and information at 85% proficiency. Preschool students will use drawing, dictation, and controlled linear scribbles to convey a message. Pre-K students will use drawing, dictation, mock letter forms, and letter strings to convey a message.

Social Emotional

Domain	Social and Emotional Development
Goal (BROAD)	Children transitioning from the CAC Early Childhood Education program will have strong relationships with adults and peers, with increasing self-regulation of feelings and behaviors, and a positive sense of self and belonging, contributing to their own home and school communities.
Objective (SMART)	By the end of the 2026-2027 program year, all students will demonstrate the ability to manage feelings at 90% proficiency. Preschool children will comfort self by seeking out a special object or person and PreK students will demonstrate the ability to look at a situation with a different perspective and/or delay their need for gratification.

School Readiness Goals: Early Head Start

School readiness goals for the 2026-27 School Program Year:

Math. Early Cognition, & STEAM

Domain	Mathematics, Early Cognition and STEAM
Goal (BROAD)	Children in the CAC Early Childhood Education program will use early math, cognition, and scientific thinking to observe, problem solve, describe, and understand the world around them.
Objective (SMART)	During the 2026-2027 program year, children will demonstrate the ability to quantify. Children will meet widely held expectations for their age group prior to their next classroom transition. Older infants and young toddlers (9-18 months) may begin to show an understanding of the concept of more. Older toddlers and two-year olds will demonstrate an understanding of the concept of more, one, and two.
Objective (SMART)	During the 2026-2027 program year, children will explore spatial relationships. Children will meet widely held expectations for their age group prior to their next classroom transition. Older toddlers and young two year olds will follow simple directions related to positions (in, over, under, up, etc.).

Approaches to Learning

Domain	Approaches to Learning
Goal (BROAD)	Children in the CAC Early Childhood Education program will demonstrate positive approaches to learning through persistence, engagement, problem solving, curiosity, and flexibility.
Objective (SMART)	During the 2026-2027 program year, children will demonstrate the ability to show curiosity and motivation. Children will meet widely held expectations for their age group prior to their next classroom transition. Young infants, older infants and toddlers will use their senses to explore the immediate environment. Two year-olds will explore and investigate ways to make something happen.
Objective (SMART)	During the 2026-2027 school year children will demonstrate the ability to remember and connect experiences by recognizing and recalling familiar people, places, and objects. Children will meet widely held expectations for their age group prior to their next classroom transition. Older infants, toddlers, and two-year-olds will look for a hidden object where it was last seen and/or say/sign the names of common objects when seen.

Language, Communication, and Literacy Development

Domain	Language, Communication and Literacy Development
Goal (BROAD)	Children in the CAC Early Childhood Education program will demonstrate communication skills by attending to, understanding, and responding to communication and language from others. Children will participate in reciprocal language experiences through physical and verbal expressions with familiar adults and peers. Children will develop positive approaches to early literacy through participation in reading and storytelling experiences.

Domain	Language, Communication and Literacy Development
Objective (SMART)	During the 2026-2027 program year, children will use age-appropriate conversational and other communication skills by engaging in conversations. Children will meet widely held expectations prior to their next classroom transition. Infants and young toddlers (0-18 months) will engage in simple back and forth exchanges with others (coos, babbles in strings of sound, shakes head). Toddlers and two-year-olds (18-36 months) will initiate and attend to brief conversations with one or two word responses.

Social Emotional

Domain	Social and Emotional Development
Goal (BROAD)	Children in the CAC Early Childhood Education program will develop strong relationships with familiar adults and peers, show increasing understanding and identification of emotions, the ability to co-regulate feelings and behaviors, and a positive sense of self and belonging in their family and community.
Objective (SMART)	During the 2026-2027 school year, children will demonstrate the ability to regulate their own emotions and behaviors by managing feelings. Children will meet the widely held expectations for their age group prior to their next classroom transition. Infants and young toddlers (0-18 months) will use adult support to calm self. Older toddlers and two-year-olds (18 months-36 months) will comfort themselves by seeking out a special object or person.

Perceptual, Motor, and Physical

Domain	Perceptual, Motor, and Physical
Goal (BROAD)	Children in the CAC Early Childhood Education program will develop the ability to use sensorial, fine-motor, and gross-motor skills to explore the social and physical environment.
Objective (SMART)	During the 2026-2027 program year, children will demonstrate fine-motor strength and coordination by using fingers and hands. Children will meet widely held expectations prior to their next classroom transition. Infants will reach for, touch, and hold objects purposefully. Toddlers and two-year-olds will use fingers and whole-arm movements to manipulate and explore objects.

2025-26 Head Start Self-Assessment Outcomes

In October 2026, the Head Start Self-Assessment findings detailed above were shared, and Program Goals and Objectives were updated and approved by the Policy Council and the CAC Board of Directors as part of the annual planning process. The above Program and School Readiness Goals and Objectives for the 2026-27 reflect updates to the objectives and suggested strategies from the Self-Assessment process and support ongoing and continuous improvement in the next program year.