Message from the Director

Dear Friends,

We are pleased to present the 2018/2019 Annual Report for The Opportunity Alliance Head Start and Early Head Start Programs. The following Report highlights our activities and accomplishments over the past year that have supported children and their families toward success in school and in life beyond.

Through the ongoing and collaborative efforts of our dedicated Staff, Management Team, parent led Policy Council, TOA Board of Directors and Community Partners; we offered early care and education opportunities for 343 children and expecting parents across Cumberland County. These services were delivered through a range of program options including home-based family visiting, Head Start, childcare and Public Pre-K to meet the diverse needs of families with young children.

Our community is uniquely diverse in the State of Maine - in cultures, languages, family structures, and experiences that families bring with them. We are proud of our program’s efforts to individualize to meet the varied needs of our children and families and connect them to each other and to the Greater Portland community.

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about who we are, who we serve, and the great work our Head Start and Early Head Start Programs are doing to support children and families across Cumberland County.

Sincerely,

Debra Flynn
Statement of Mission

The mission of Head Start and Early Head Start is to promote school readiness for low-income children and their families by providing access to affordable, high quality early learning experiences.

Overview

Head Start and Early Head Start programs support the comprehensive development of children from birth to age five, in centers and in homes, in a variety of ways:

- **Early Learning**: Teachers and family visitors facilitate individualized learning experiences to promote children’s readiness for school and beyond. Through planned and spontaneous instruction, relationships with adults, and play, children grow in language and literacy, early math and science concepts, and social and emotional development.

- **Health**: Children receive health and development screenings, nutritious meals, oral health and mental health support. Programs connect families with medical, dental, and mental health services, and ensure that children are receiving the services they need.

- **Family well-being**: Parents and families are supported in achieving their own goals, such as housing stability, continued education, and financial security. Programs support and strengthen parent-child relationships and engage families around children’s learning and development.

All Head Start and Early Head Start classrooms are licensed by the state of Maine, staffed by credentialed professionals, and meet the requirements for Step 4 on the Quality for ME scale.
# Table of Contents

Mission/Overview ............................................. 4  
Program Snapshot ............................................ 5  
Our Approach to School Readiness ..................... 6  
Families At-A-Glance ....................................... 7  
Children At-A-Glance ....................................... 8  
Enrollment ...................................................... 9  
Parent Engagement ......................................... 10  
Health, Nutrition & Safety ................................. 11  
Federal Monitoring Review & Program ............... 12  
Strengths ....................................................... 12  
Goals for the Year Ahead .................................. 13  
Funding Snapshot for Fiscal Year 2018/2019 ............. 14  
Overview of Budget Expenditures ....................... 15
The Head Start and Early Head Start program is federally funded to serve 272 children and pregnant women. There are 197 Head Start slots and 75 Early Head Start slots.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Center Based Sites</th>
<th>Number of Classrooms</th>
<th>Number of Children Served</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bridgton</td>
<td>1 Head Start</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gorham</td>
<td>1 Head Start</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Portland           | 1 Head Start/Public Pre-K  
6 Head Start - 3 Early Head Start | 140                        |
| Westbrook          | 3 Head Start/Public Pre-K | 44                         |
| **Home Based Visitors** | 6 Family Visitors    | 52                         |
Our Approach to School Readiness

Research shows that children who receive high-quality early childhood experiences and strong family support are far more likely to succeed in school and throughout their life.

🍎 **Children are prepared for school**

We believe children thrive in nurturing environments in which they are trusted and respected. Children benefit from a comprehensive program that supports all areas of development. Children learn through relationships with teachers and peers, through creative open-ended play and through exploring intentionally designed classroom environments. To support learning, our program utilizes the *Creative Curriculum* for infants and toddlers and *Opening the World of Learning* (OWL) and *Second Step* for preschoolers. Our family visitors use the *Parents as Teachers* (PAT) curriculum with families in the home.

🍎 **Families are supporting children’s learning**

To maximize child outcomes, we work to support family stability and wellness. Parents are considered their children's first and most important teachers. They are viewed as partners in identifying the learning needs and goals of their children. Through home visits, parent conferences, parent committees and Policy Council parents are fully engaged in the education of their children.

🍎 **Schools are ready as children transition into kindergarten**

We cannot achieve our goals without strong community partnerships. We strategically collaborate with other providers to improve access to services for our children and families and to support their transition to Kindergarten. We strive to partner with welcoming schools by inviting them into our program, participating in transition meetings, and providing them with important information as children and families move on to the next step in their journey.

**Data depicted is a % comparison of 4 year old school readiness assessments for the Fall of 2018 and the Spring of 2019 using GOLD School Readiness Measures.**

- **Social/Emotional**
  - Fall 18: 27.4%
  - Spring 19: 73.5%

- **Physical**
  - Fall 18: 28.8%
  - Spring 19: 67.3%

- **Language**
  - Fall 18: 30%
  - Spring 19: 59.2%

- **Cognitive**
  - Fall 18: 27.9%
  - Spring 19: 68.4%

- **Literacy**
  - Fall 18: 18.5%
  - Spring 19: 49%

- **Math**
  - Fall 18: 11.1%
  - Spring 19: 38.8%
Families At-A-Glance

The Opportunity Alliance served a total of 334 children and their families and 9 prenatal women in our Head Start & Early Head Start programs. The following charts provide information about the families we served.

**Eligibility Type**

- Below 100% Poverty Line - 196
- Public Assistance - 60
- Foster Child - 2
- Homeless - 47
- Over Income - 29

**Parent Education Levels**

- Baccalaureate or Higher - 41
- Associates/Vocational - 59
- High School/GED - 68
- Less than High School - 47

**Caregiver Status**

- Two-Parent Families - 211
- Single-Parent Families - 136
Children At-A-Glance

The children served by The Opportunity Alliance Head Start and Early Head Start programs in the 2018-2019 program year were developmentally, culturally, and linguistically diverse.

Participant Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 Years or Younger</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Years</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Years</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Years or Older</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Languages Spoken

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Central/Southern American/Mexican</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Eastern/South Asian</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Asian</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Preschool Primary Disabilities

Through initial developmental screenings and ongoing assessment and observation, many children were referred to Child Development Services (CDS) for special services. 37 children in the Head Start program had an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) 9 children in Early Head Start had an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). 10 children who were eligible for services did not receive them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disability</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speech or Language Impairments</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autism</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental Delay</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Categorized Developmental Delay</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autism</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech or Language</td>
<td>63.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Enrollment Overview

TOA’s funded enrollment is 272 slots. We are funded to serve 122 children during the months of June, July, and August. The average of enrollment was 234. All students (100%) enrolled in the program were eligible for the program.
Parent Engagement

Parents have many ways to engage in their child’s education including: volunteering in the classroom, attending Parent Conferences, participating in Parent Committees at the center level, and working as part of the Policy Council to provide input on program-wide decisions.

Total Volunteers

Parent Volunteers

Total # of Volunteers- 237

Head Start & Early Head Start Parent Volunteers - 199
Health, Nutrition & Safety

Healthy nutrition plays a vital role in the development of our children. Many families who access Head Start & Early Head Start services experience food insecurity. Our program currently partners with programs that support healthy nutrition and wellness:

- **SNAP Education** provides classroom activities that teach children about healthy eating.

- The **5-2-1-0 Let's Go!** program is an informational and technical assistance resource that helps programs generate goals around nutrition, wellness, parent education and physical activity.

- **The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)** provides reimbursements for nutritious meals and snacks for all children in our centers.

- **The Locker Project**, in partnership with the Good Shepherd Food Bank, helps to ensure food security for all Maine children through local schools. The project provides students with healthy class-time snacks and take-home food for the times they are most likely to experience hunger.

**Vision & Hearing Screenings** are now conducted in collaboration with the local Lion’s Club and Northeast Speech & Hearing. These community partners provide us with the opportunity to use professionally trained staff, using appropriate equipment for evidence based screenings.

**Early Head Start**

- Children who received medical treatment: 67
- Children who received dental treatment: 50
- Children up-to-date on immunizations: 84

**Head Start**

- Children who received medical treatment: 154
- Children who received dental treatment: 161
- Children up-to-date on immunizations: 175
Federal Monitoring Review & Program Strengths

The most recent Federal Monitoring Review was conducted in 2018-2019. TOA was found to have met the requirements of all applicable performance standards, laws, regulations and policy requirements. In addition, the following three areas were highlighted as unique or innovative program services.

Mental Health Services
To address the increasing complex mental health needs of children and families in our care, our program uniquely embeds three full-time clinicians and two contracted consultants to provide comprehensive services on-site and in homes. In the 2018-2019 program year, there were 33 mental health referrals, of which 97 percent received services. In addition, the Clinicians provided teacher consultation, classroom observation and practice recommendations. A ready resource for program staff, Clinicians consulted about the behavior and/or mental health of 73 children.

Family and Community Engagement
As a Refugee Resettlement Community, Portland is home to a uniquely diverse community in the State of Maine. In the 2018-2019 program year, the Head Start and Early Head Start programs served far more families who were English Language Learners than native English speakers. To meet the distinctive needs of the community, our program hired teachers and engaged volunteers who speak the language of children in our classrooms; increased staff training in how to work effectively with Dual Language Learners (DLL); and budgeted $100,000 for interpreters to support full family participation and engagement.

Community Partnerships
The Federal Monitoring Review recognized our special partnership with the Palaver Strings Lullaby Project. The Lullaby Project paired pregnant women and new mothers and fathers from our Early Head Start family visiting program with professional artists to write and sing personal lullabies in their home language for their babies. When completed, parents were invited to record their lullabies in the studio and perform at a local music venue.
Goals for the Year Ahead

1. Continue to develop our program’s ability to serve children with diverse developmental, mental health, and language needs through training and ongoing support of classroom and family visiting staff.

2. Evaluate our School Readiness Goals and improve our use of this school readiness data to drive program decisions to ensure best outcomes for children.

3. Improve our connections with Public Schools in the communities we serve and strengthen the transition process into Kindergarten for children and families.
Federal Funding Snapshot

The Opportunity Alliance's fiscal year 2018-2019 included the dates of July 1st, 2018 through June 30th, 2019.

**Funds Received for Fiscal Year 2018-2019**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Funding</th>
<th>Head Start</th>
<th>Early Head Start</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federal Grant Funds</td>
<td>$2,693,274.00</td>
<td>$906,571.00</td>
<td>$3,599,845.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USDA (CACFP) Funds</td>
<td>$119,280.00</td>
<td>$40,864.00</td>
<td>$160,144.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Federal Share (In-Kind)</td>
<td>$691,740.00</td>
<td>$238,820.00</td>
<td>$930,560.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$3,504,294.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,186,255.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$4,690,549.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Federal Grant Funds Expenditures for Fiscal year 2018-2019 by Category**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expense Category</th>
<th>Head Start</th>
<th>Early Head Start</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td>$1,532,115.00</td>
<td>$494,179.00</td>
<td>$2,026,294.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fringe Benefits</td>
<td>$373,941.00</td>
<td>$208,270.00</td>
<td>$582,211.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies</td>
<td>$121,698.00</td>
<td>$36,057.00</td>
<td>$157,755.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contracts</td>
<td>$53,759.00</td>
<td>$12,332.00</td>
<td>$66,091.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>$266,796.00</td>
<td>$69,463.00</td>
<td>$386,259.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>$13,111.00</td>
<td>$733.00</td>
<td>$13,844.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training/Technical</td>
<td>$29,171.00</td>
<td>$22,100.00</td>
<td>$51,271.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,361,420.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$843,134.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$3,204,554.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An annual audit for fiscal year 2018-2019 was conducted by Berry Dunn, an independent auditor. The firm did not disclose any instances of non-compliance.
2018-19 Federal Grant Funds Budget Expenditures

**Early Head Start**

- Personnel: $494,179
- Fringe: $208,270
- Other: $69,463
- Supplies: $36,057
- Contracts: $12,332
- Equipment: $733
- Travel: $292

Direct Expenditures: $821,326
Indirect Charges: $85,245
Total Expenditures: $906,571

**Head Start**

- Personnel: $1,152,115
- Fringe: $373,941
- Other: $266,796
- Supplies: $121,698
- Contracts: $53,759
- Equipment: $13,111
- Travel: $1,511

Direct Expenditures: $2,362,931
Indirect Charges: $330,343
Total Expenditures: $2,693,274
TOA assures non-discrimination in all aspects of program participation, in conformance with Federal regulations. No one will be denied access to any aspect of program participation because of age, sex, sexual orientation, race, color, religion, national origin, handicap, veteran status, or political affiliation or belief. Some of the services described here are partially funded by the Department of Human Services.

Center Based Locations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bridgton</th>
<th>Gorham</th>
<th>Portland</th>
<th>South Portland</th>
<th>Westbrook</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 Meadow Street</td>
<td>28 Huskey Drive</td>
<td>81 East Oxford Street 102-104 Riverton Drive 85 Grant Street 215 Congress Street</td>
<td>50 Lydia Lane</td>
<td>110 Huntress Ave</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOA assures non-discrimination in all aspects of program participation, in conformance with Federal regulations. No one will be denied access to any aspect of program participation because of age, sex, sexual orientation, race, color, religion, national origin, handicap, veteran status, or political affiliation or belief. Some of the services described here are partially funded by the Department of Human Services.