Dear Friends,

We are pleased to present the 2019/2020 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 across Cumberland County.

We cannot reflect on the past year without considering the impact of the coronavirus pandemic. Cumberland County recorded the greatest number of cases and the third highest case rate in the State. In addition, Maine experienced the widest racial disparity stemming from the coronavirus in the nation. In June 2020, the Portland Press Herald reported that black residents were contracting the virus at 20 times the rate of their white neighbors. The impact was devastating for far too many of our Head Start and Early Head Start families and staff.

Short and long-term health impacts, missed time on the job, decreased wages, loss of employment, food insecurity, and lack of childcare for school-age children are just a few of the many ways families were affected. In the darkness of the pandemic, Head Start and Early Head Start offered hope to 290 children and their families.

Despite having to close our physical doors in March, teachers and family advocates provided daily resources and support to children and families. They used whatever platform they could to stay connected – phone, text, ZOOM, WhatsApp, See-Saw. And as soon as we were able to safely do so, we re-opened our doors at our flagship childcare center and provided an intensive summer program for 20 children most impacted by the loss of in-person services. 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 accomplished over the past year.

Sincerely,

Debra Flynn
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Statement of Mission

The mission of Head Start and Early Head Start is to nurture safe and trusting relationships so that all members of the community know they matter and believe in their potential to impact their world.

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.*
Program Snapshot

The Head Start and Early Head Start program is federally funded to serve 272 slots. Head Start has a total of 197 and Early Head Start has a total of 75.

<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  
3 Head Start/Child Care  
3 Early Head Start/Child Care  
2 Head Start | 122                      |
| Westbrook          | 3 Head Start/Public Pre-K | 44                        |
| South Portland     | 1 Head Start/Child Care | 18                        |
| Home-based Services| 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 well-being. 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 2019 and the Winter of 2020 using GOLD School Readiness Measures. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, we were not able to collect Spring 2020 data.**
Families At-A-Glance

The Opportunity Alliance served a total of 290 children and their families and 6 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**: 174
- **Public Assistance**: 48
- **Foster Child**: 3
- **Homelessness**: 47
- **Over Income**: 27

### Parent Education Levels

- **Baccalaureate or Higher**: 42
- **Associates/Vocational**: 46
- **High School/GED**: 60
- **Less than High School**: 43

### Caregiver Status

- **Two-Parent Families**: 170
- **Single-Parent Families**: 97
Children At-A-Glance

The children served by The Opportunity Alliance Head Start and Early Head Start programs in the 2019-2020 program year were developmentally, culturally, and linguistically diverse.

Participant Age

- 2 Years and or Under: 100 (34.5%)
- 3-year old's: 69 (23.8%)
- 4-year old's: 121 (41.7%)

Race

- African American: 170 (61.6%)
- White: 94 (34.1%)
- Multi-Racial: 4
- Hispanic Latino: 8

Children with Disabilities

Through initial developmental screenings and ongoing assessment and observation, many children were referred to Child Development Services (CDS) for special services. Due to the pandemic, many children who were approved for services did not receive them.

- 34 children in the Head Start program had an Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
- 7 children in Early Head Start had an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).
- 12 children who were eligible for services did not receive them.

Speech or Language Impairments: 23

Health Impairments: 6

Autistic: 1

Developmental Delay: 11
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 223. All students (100%) enrolled in the program were eligible for the program.
Parent Engagement

Accurate data not available.

When our Head Start and Early Head Start program went fully remote in March 2020, Family engagement took on an entirely new meaning. Virtual services engaged families in their children’s learning and reinforced our program’s belief that parents/guardians are a child’s first and most important teachers. Staff members provided families with daily activities that they could do with their children and supplemental videos of staff members reading books and sharing songs. Families began assuming more responsibility for their children’s education and our staff sought ways to best guide and support them in that role.

Family Conferences were completed in May through a wholistic approach that included all team members. Family input on what their children were learning at home and how they were growing and developing were essential to the process.
Nutrition

Nutrition plays a vital role in the development of our children. Our program currently partners with programs that support health, 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.

- **Wayside Food Program** increases access to nutrition food in Southern Maine. Through our partnership, families have received a variety of fresh and shelf stable foods on a more regular basis.

- **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.

Food insecurity among Head Start and Early Head Start families and our response to it have grown significantly as a result of the pandemic. As an expansion of our partnership with the Locker Project, our program delivered more than 28,280 pounds of fresh food and healthy staples to Head Start families in 2020 - about two-thirds of which was fresh produce, bread and meat.
Family Services Support

**Health Services**
Though the coronavirus pandemic interrupted families’ access to health care, immunizations and dental treatment, Family Services staff continued to support families to secure dental and medical homes for preventative health care measures.

- Immunizations: 191
- Dental Home: 103
- Medical Home: 160

**Other Family Services**

- Emergency/Crisis services: 84
- Health Education: 50
- Parenting Education: 55
- ESL Training: 48
- Education Training: 20
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. **Continue to build a program-wide Culture of Safety** to ensure the safety and wellness of children in our care.
Federal Funding Snapshot


### Funds Received for Fiscal Year 2019-2020

<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>$2,741,628.00</td>
<td>$943,435.00</td>
<td>$3,685,063.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>USDA (CACFP) Funds</td>
<td>$57,789.00</td>
<td>$24,484.00</td>
<td>$78,273.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Federal Share (In-Kind)</td>
<td>$685,407.00</td>
<td>$235,859.00</td>
<td>$921,266.00</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$3,480,824.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,203,778.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$4,684,602.00</strong></td>
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### Federal Grant Funds Expenditures for Fiscal Year 2019-2020 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>$1,136,212.00</td>
<td>$410,691.00</td>
<td>$1,546,903.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fringe Benefits</td>
<td>$386,691.00</td>
<td>$128,031.00</td>
<td>$514,722.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies</td>
<td>$93,235.00</td>
<td>$21,200.00</td>
<td>$114,435.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contracts</td>
<td>$65,182.00</td>
<td>$11,200.00</td>
<td>$76,382.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (includes Travel)</td>
<td>$703,458.00</td>
<td>$247,317.00</td>
<td>$950,775.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>$18,460.00</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
<td>$18,960.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Training/Technical</td>
<td>$29,171.00</td>
<td>$20,818.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>$309,219.00</td>
<td>$103,678.00</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,741,628.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$943,435.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$3,685,063.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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An annual audit for fiscal year 2019-2020 was conducted by Berry Dunn, an independent auditor. The firm did not disclose any instances of non-compliance.
2019-20 Federal Grant Funds Budget Expenditures

**Early Head Start**
- Personnel: $410,691
- Fringe: $128,031
- Other: $247,317
- Supplies: $21,200
- Contracts: $11,200
- Equipment: $500

Direct Expenditures: $839,757
Indirect Charges: $103,678
Total Expenditures: $943,435

**Head Start**
- Personnel: $1,136,212
- Fringe: $386,691
- Other: $703,458
- Supplies: $93,235
- Contracts: $65,182
- Equipment: $18,460

Direct Expenditures: $2,432,409
Indirect Charges: $309,219
Total Expenditures: $2,741,628
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.