



OZARK OPPORTUNITIES, INC.

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Head Start/Early Head Start

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE PUBLIC

Program Year 2021-2022

I. Program Summary

A. REASON FOR THIS REPORT:

This report has been prepared in order to comply with the Head Start Reauthorization Act of 2007. The Act states:

“Each Head Start agency shall make available to the public a report published at least once in each fiscal year that discloses the following information from the recently concluded fiscal year, except that reporting such information shall not reveal personally identifiable information about an individual child or parent:

- (A) The total amount of public and private funds received and the amount from each source.
- (B) An explanation of budgetary expenditures and proposed budget for the fiscal year.
- (C) The total number of children and families served, the average monthly enrollment (as a percentage of funded enrollment), and the percentage of eligible children served.
- (D) The results of the most recent review by the Secretary and the financial audit.
- (E) The percentage of enrolled children that received medical and dental exams.
- (F) Information about parent involvement activities.
- (G) The agency’s efforts to prepare children for Kindergarten.
- (H) Any other information required by the Secretary. (Not applicable at this time.)”

B. HISTORY AND OVERVIEW:

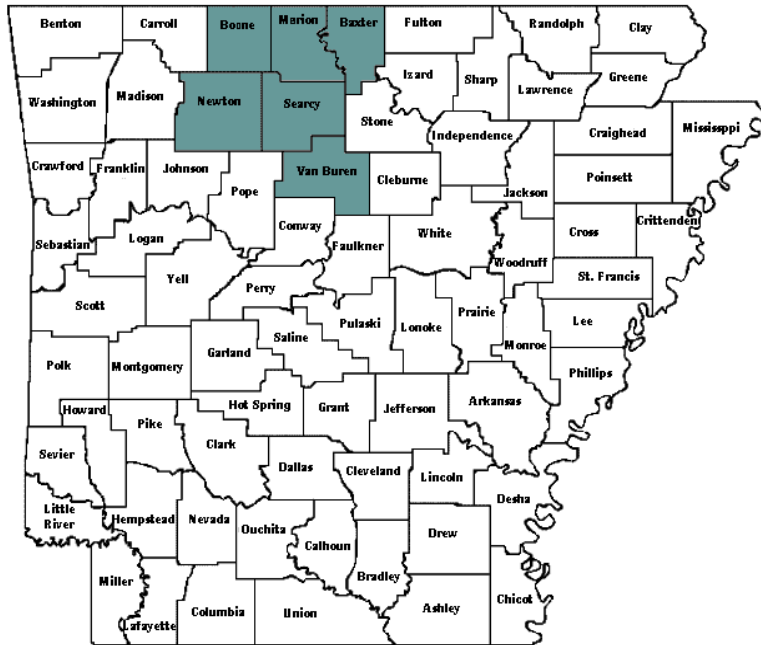
Ozark Opportunities, Inc. (“OOI”) Head Start has been in existence since the summer of 1966, and has a legacy of providing quality, nurturing education for 3-5 year old children in a six-county service area. OOI is a *Community Action Agency* (a private nonprofit incorporated in 1969 that is an eligible-entity to receive CSBG funds.)

The agency provides Child Development Programs (Head Start and ABC Pre-K and Early Head Start infant and toddler care) and Community Services (LIHEAP energy assistance, Emergency Solutions Grant homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing, Family Development case management, etc.) to low income individuals and families, as well as involvement in community development activities to support anti-poverty initiatives.

The mission of OOI is ***to partner with organizations, families and individuals to provide services and empowerment opportunities for those with limited means to improve their quality of life.*** This mission meshes well with that of Head Start, as the agency’s programs work well together to assist families to learn; not only how to assist their children in the learning process; but also to improve the families’ opportunities to better their situation and work their way out of poverty.

The service area of *Ozark Opportunities, Inc.* Head Start/Early Head Start is in north-central Arkansas. The area is largely populated by families that have made the Ozark Mountains their home for many generations, and poverty has been a constant companion over the years.

Counties served include: Baxter, Boone, Marion, Newton, Searcy, and Van Buren.



C. Required Elements:

A. Budgetary Information:

- 1. The total amount of public and private funds received and the amount from each source.**

Dept. of Health & Human Services- Federal	\$3,034,582
USDA (CACFP) Nutrition Program- Federal	\$113,142
Non-Federal Match (In-Kind)- Public	\$1,255,198
TOTAL	\$4,402,922

2. An explanation of budgetary expenditures and budget for the fiscal year.

3/1/2021 - 2/28/2022		
Cost Category	TOTAL BUDGET	TOTAL EXPENSES
Salaries	\$195,0081	\$194,9447
Fringe Benefits	\$616,514	\$518,812
Contractual	\$164,848	\$153,404
Travel	\$21,650	\$4,115
Supplies	\$74,117	\$108,751
Equipment	9,000	\$8,313
Other	\$198,372	\$267,830
Federal	\$3,034,582	3,010,673
Non-Federal Match	\$758,647	1,255,198
TOTAL	\$3,793,229	\$4,265,871

3. ERSEA Data; 2021-22 School Year:

The total number of children and families served during 2021-2022 program year is as follows:

Head Start	232
Early Head Start	48
TOTAL	280

Number of children and families served during the 2020-2021 program year:

Program	Total Served (cumulatively)	Total Families served (cumulatively)	Number of families served that were from single parent households
Early Head Start	65	58	29
Head Start	254	237	97
Total	319	295	126

Eligibility Status:

<u>Early Head Start</u>		
Income was below Poverty Line	49	76%
Public Assistance TANF/TEA	3	4%
Foster Child	5	7.5%
Homeless	4	6.5%
Income 100%-130%	3	4%
Over Income	1	2%
TOTAL	65	100%

<i>Head Start</i>		
Income was below Poverty Line	171	67%
Public Assistance TANF/TEA	8	3%
Foster Child	5	2%
Homeless	4	2%
Income 100%-130%	49	19%
Over Income	17	7%
Total	254	100%

Enrollment - Average monthly enrollment (as a % of funded enrollment)

Program Month	Funded Enrollment		Monthly Enrollment		% HS	% EHS
	Head Start	Early Head Start	Head Start	Early Head Start		
August-21	232	48	232	48	100%	100%
September-21	232	48	232	48	100%	100%
October-21	232	48	221	48	95%	100%
November-21	232	48	221	48	95%	100%
December-21	232	48	225	48	97%	100%
January-22	232	48	227	48	97%	100%
February-22	232	48	225	48	97%	100%
March-22	219	64	226	48	103%	75%
April-22	219	64	226	48	103%	75%
May-22	219	64	221	48	101%	75%
June-21	232	48	Out for Summer	48	N/A	Out for Summer

B. Most Recent Review Findings:

The most recent Head Start Triennial Review completed at OOI was in 2019; it was composed of a program-wide review of adherence to regulations, HS Act, and compliance protocol called the “FA2” and a classroom teacher review (CLASS) which graded teaching staff on 3 domains of performance.

- **FA2 Review- NO FINDINGS (see letter below)...**

Program Performance Summary Report

To: Authorizing Official/Board Chairperson

Mrs. Paulette Hill
OZARK OPPORTUNITIES, INC
 701 E Prospect Ave
 Harrison, AR 72601 - 4419

From: Responsible HHS Official



Date: 03/13/2019

Dr. Deborah Bergeron
Director, Office of Head Start

From January 14, 2019 to January 18, 2019, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) conducted a Focus Area Two (FA2) monitoring review of the OZARK OPPORTUNITIES, INC Head Start and Early Head Start programs. This report contains information about the grantee's performance and compliance with the requirements of the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) or Public Law 110-134, *Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007*.

The Office of Head Start (OHS) would like to thank your governing body, policy council, parents, and staff for their engagement in the review process. Based on the information gathered during this review, we have found your program meets the requirements of all applicable HSPPS, laws, regulations, and policy requirements.

Please contact your Regional Office for guidance should you have any questions or concerns. Your Regional Office will follow up on the content of this report and can work with you to identify resources to support your program's continuous improvement.

- **CLASS Review: Agency was in the top of all three domains in the nation(!)**

To: Board Chairperson

Mrs. Paulette Hill, Board Chairperson
OZARK OPPORTUNITIES, INC
 701 E Prospect Ave
 Harrison, AR 72601-4419

From: Responsible HHS Official



Date: 03/28/2019

Dr. Deborah Bergeron
Director, Office of Head Start

Results from CLASS® Observations

Thank you for your support during the recent Office of Head Start onsite CLASS® review conducted from 12/03/2018 to 12/07/2018 of your Head Start program. Grant **06CH010428**.

Observations were conducted in preschool center-based classrooms using the Pre-K Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®). The CLASS® tool looks at three domains and ten dimensions of teacher-child interactions and measures those observed interactions on a seven point scale. Please share these results with the appropriate governing board, policy council, management, staff and stakeholders.

DOMAIN	Score	DOMAIN	Score	DOMAIN	Score
Emotional Support	6.2750	Classroom Organization	6.0778	Instructional Support	3.7222

DIMENSIONS					
Positive Climate	6.23	Behavior Management	6.63	Concept Development	3.20
Negative Climate*	1.00	Productivity	6.40	Quality of Feedback	3.70
Teacher Sensitivity	6.13	Instructional Learning Formats	5.20	Language Modeling	4.27
Regard for Student Perspectives	5.73				

*Note: To calculate the Emotional Support domain, subtract the Negative Climate score from 8, add the Positive Climate, Teacher Sensitivity, and Regard for Student Perspective scores, then divide by 4.

For more information on CLASS® domains and dimensions, please see the attached description and visit the Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center, National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning at <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/ta-system/teaching>.

C. Audit- Results of the most recent review by the Secretary and the financial audit.

The Single-Agency Audit for *Ozark Opportunities, Inc.* for fiscal year (ended February 28, 2022) reflected the following findings:

Financial Statements:

Type of Auditor's Report:	Unmodified
Internal Control Over Financial Reporting:	
Material Weakness Identified	None Reported
Significant Deficiencies Identified that are NOT considered to be Material Weaknesses	Yes
Non-Compliance material to Financial Statements noted:	No

Federal Awards:

Internal Control Over Major Programs:	
Material Weakness Identified	None Reported
Significant Deficiencies Identified that are NOT Considered to be Material Weaknesses	None Reported
Type of Auditor's Report issued on Compliance for Major Programs	Unmodified
Findings required to be reported in accordance with 2CFR Section 200.516(a)	No

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS- According to the Audit Firm:

Significant Deficiencies:

2022-01– Material Misstatements

Condition: In the process of performing our audit, we encountered account balances that required adjustment to fairly state the balance which resulted in an unknown difference in revenue.

Criteria: Complete and accurate accounting records and related supporting documentation should be maintained. In addition, a timely account reconciliation and financial statement close process should be implemented.

Cause: It is our belief the problem is due to a change in accounting personnel and applicable roles, unnecessary accounting entries, and lack of timely reconciliations.

Effect: As such, accounting processes were not efficient and effective in reporting account balances which could cause material misstatements and unreconciled accounts.

Recommendation: Timely and accurate financial statements are critical in aiding management in making decisions to effectively manage the organization. It is our recommendation that management reconciles and adjusts account balances on a monthly basis based on appropriate documentation. In order to provide more accurate and timely financial reporting, we highly encourage management to implement a more rigorous review process.

Agency Response:

Finding #2022-01 Material Misstatements
Year Ended February 28, 2022

Condition: In the process of performing our audit, we encountered account balances that required adjustment to fairly state the balance.

Management's Response and Corrective Action Plan: Management agrees with the auditor's finding of existing accrued leave liability account balances contained in the overall financial statements of Ozark Opportunities, Inc. These balances are a result of a transition from one payroll software used for many years to a new system. The new payroll and HR management system has an improved way of recording accrued leave balances. While this new balance was recorded correctly the old balances were not removed from the balance sheet causing an adjustment needed to clear off the old balances.

It is a practice of *Ozark Opportunities, Inc.* to reconcile all balance sheet accounts on a monthly basis to ensure the accuracy. Each program is also invoiced and reconciled on a monthly basis as well, to ensure accrual accounting methods are followed.

D. Health Data (the percentage of enrolled children that received medical and dental exams):

Date Type	Head Start		Early Head Start	
Physical Exams:	206 out of 254	81%	58 out of 65	89%
Dental Exams:	223 out of 254	88%	51 out of 65	79%

E. Parent Involvement Activities:

As the key element of a child’s life, family engagement, is critical to the full development of a child’s potential. Our Head Start program is committed to helping each child and family achieve success through a comprehensive partnership. Parent engagement begins at enrollment. Parents are welcomed into the classroom and encouraged to observe or assist with daily activities.

Helping the child with handwashing and “Journal Time” are both excellent examples of how this is implemented. Routinely scheduled home visits and conferences provide regular conversations on children’s progress to enhance parents’ role as educators.

As disclosed in earlier pieces of this report, the Coronavirus Pandemic heavily influenced the outcomes and ability for parent engagement in the program, as we did not allow parents into classrooms for the duration of the 2021-22 school year.

Even so, Parents, Family Support Workers, and teachers work cooperatively to set goals. Home Tasks are sent home with the family to support their child's growth and development. In the 2021-2022 school year, **563 individuals volunteered their time or talents to our Head Start program participating in at-home activities.**

Opportunities for parents and families to advance their own learning interests exist through education, training, and other experiences that support their parenting, career, and life goals. During the 2021-2022 school year, a total of **282 families worked with a Family Development Specialist to accomplish goals, obtain stability, and/or learn about valuable community resources.**

Some topics included: **obtaining employment, securing transportation, finding safe housing, building credit, budgeting, distributing food, securing mental health services, obtaining health insurance, and enrolling in further education.**

Parents and families can participate in leadership development, decision-making, or program policy development through participation in Standing Committees and/or the Policy Council. This past year, **9** parents were elected to serve as Policy Council Representatives. Through active participation, parents provide valuable input on curriculum planning, policy development, and program improvement plans.

Ozark Opportunities, Inc. is proud to have great participation from both our families and our community in an effort to build a successful future for our Head Start students and their families.

F. The Agency's Efforts to Prepare Children for Kindergarten:

"School Readiness" involves more than just children; in the broadest sense it is about children, families, early environments, schools, and communities. Children are not innately "ready" or "not ready" for school. Their skills and development are strongly influenced by their families and through their interactions with other people and environments before coming to school. It is our goal to implement and initiate school readiness goals in our organization.

Ozark Opportunities Inc. Head Start currently provides services for up to 232 Head Start and 48 Early Head Start infants and toddlers (and 50 Arkansas Better Chance Pre-K) children and families. The program serves a six-county area, and has embarked on an ambitious program improvement effort to set School Readiness Goals and improve teacher-child interactions in its classrooms.

The IXL Initiative includes Math and Literacy Learning training modules that can be done not only in the classroom but can be used in the homes as well (with help from parents).

The DRDP- Desired Results Developmental Profile is an on-going Child Assessment Program used for tracking educational growth and development with the children. Reports are analyzed after each assessment period to determine how well children are meeting development and school readiness goals according to the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning (HSCDEL) Framework.

We send out weekly Home Tasks with educational opportunities for young children to do with their families. This includes hands-on STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics) activities as well as handouts on behavioral management that share behavioral techniques with families.

RISE (Reading Initiative for Student Excellence) is used in each classroom, which is a reading and literacy program where each of our teaching staff have to do intensive training in order to be able to provide RISE Lessons to the children in the classroom. This curriculum comes from the Arkansas Department of Education.

The Lesson Plans that we use for the infants and toddlers are individualized for each child in the program. The curriculum that is used for creating the Lesson Plans comes from the *Adventures for Toddlers* and *Connecting with Infants*. This is a curriculum that has fidelity and is provided by Arkansas Better Beginnings Educational Program.

We use *Al's Pals*, and other social-emotional curriculums using puppets, *Conscious Discipline™* as well as *Baby Doll Circle Time™*, to share skills for social interactions in the classrooms. These social-emotional curriculums help to prepare children for kindergarten and support teachers and families with research and evidence-based resources.

II. Conclusion:

Ozark Opportunities, Inc. Head Start/Early Head Start Program is serious about our work with the children and families, and are proud of the outcomes we are able to accomplish with the support of the parents/guardians, staff, Policy Council, Board of Directors, and community partners; even amidst an ongoing global pandemic.

We will continue to train our staff with cutting edge strategies and approaches, and will keep them up-to-date with new technology to ensure we are able to best benefit the children and families we serve. Our teachers are doing a great job educating the children; ensuring they are able to make a smooth transition into the Kindergarten setting. Our ever-evolving staff development process ensures that the teaching staff will continue to develop their CLASS skills to better engage with children in a proper teaching environment, and we will continue to innovate new ways to improve parent-engagement across the program.

As an organization we have a commitment to partner within and outside of the agency to “wrap-around” our families to support them in their struggles to improve their lives. We are dedicated to continue to improve and use technology and proven best practices in our program. For more information on our agency and the programs we offer please visit www.ozarkopp.org or our FB page at “Ozark Opportunities”.