

OPENetwork

Your Choices Shape Their Chances

Ouachita Parish Early Childhood Network Blueprint

[1/25/2021]

Introduction

OPENetwork stands for Ouachita Parish Early Childhood Network. OPENetwork’s goal is to make high quality early care and education available to in-need children in Ouachita Parish and that all children will enter kindergarten healthy and ready for success. OPENetwork will also work to help families to make the best choices for their child’s early care and education and to be involved in supporting their child’s early development.

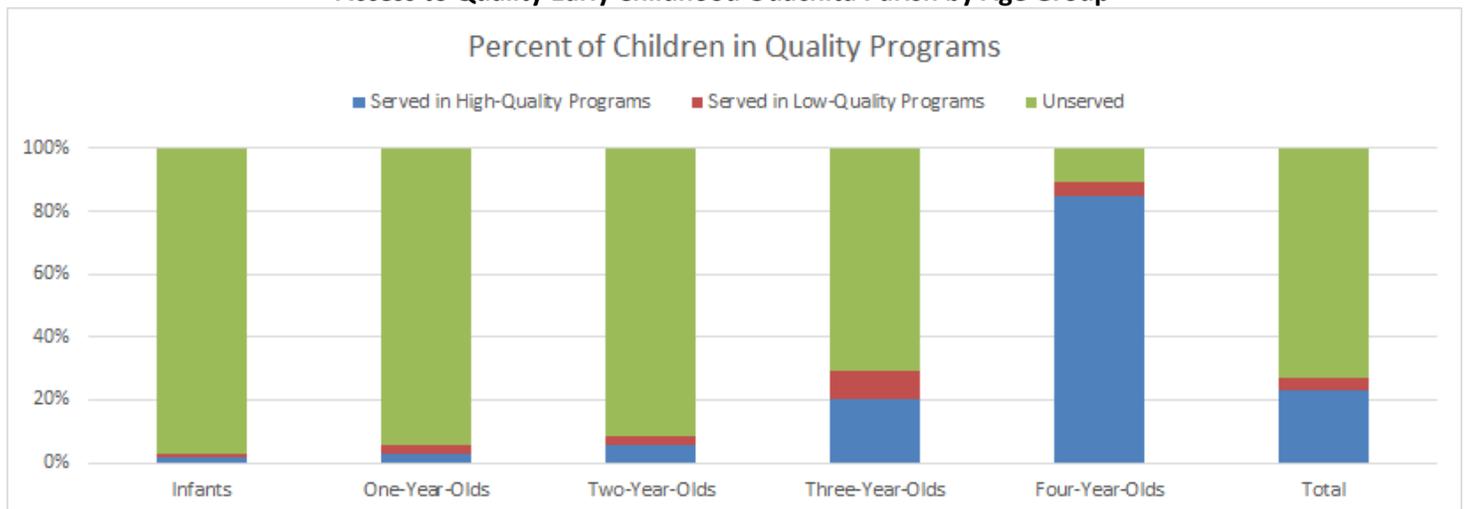
In 2012, the Louisiana legislature passed Act 3, the Early Childhood Act. Act 3 requires BESE (the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education) to create a unified system to manage all publicly funded early childhood programs. To begin this process, the Louisiana Department of Education selected communities around the state to become “Early Childhood Network Pilots.” Ouachita Parish was one of 13 communities selected to become a pilot in the first round.

All publicly funded early childhood programs must comply with Act 3. These programs include public school programs (LA 4, 8g, Title I), special education programs, Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), Head Start, Early Head Start, Early Steps, and the Nonpublic School Early Childhood Development (NSECD) program.

The primary goal of the OPENetwork is to make high quality early care and education available to all children in Ouachita Parish so that all children will enter kindergarten healthy and ready for success. OPENetwork works to help families to make the best quality choice for their child’s early care and education and to be involved in supporting their child’s early development.

Ouachita Parish has critical gaps in access to quality early care and education for our communities’ youngest learners. In 2019-2020 only 1% of Infants, 2% of Ones, 5% of Toddlers, and 20% of Threes had access to quality early care and education programs. Investing in Infants, Toddlers and Threes is key to the success of our community today and tomorrow.

Access to Quality Early Childhood Ouachita Parish by Age Group



Guiding Statements

Vision: Your Choices Shape Their Chances

Mission: Children in Ouachita Parish will enter kindergarten healthy and ready for school.

Strategic Plan

Goal 1: Increase access to early care and education opportunities for Infants, Toddlers and Threes.

Strategies:

- Evaluate availability of current Infant, Toddler and three-year-old seats by age and location with Monthly child count.
- Identify potential sites to add additional slots.
- Request eligible programs PDG funding for B-3 seats.
- Explore EHS funding options.

Resources:

- Existing: 5 EHS centers and two EHS childcare partnership sites. Several childcare centers with space to provide care for Infants, Toddlers and Threes.
- Needed: PDG funding to fund available spots for Infants, Toddlers and Threes.

Performance Metrics: Increased enrollment of Infants, Toddlers and Threes by 30 children overall.

Goal 2: Increase access to quality ECE for four-year olds.

Strategies:

- A workshop will be available to Pre/K teachers on the CLASS Instructional Support dimension and kits will be provided.
- Teachstone CLASS Trainings will be offered.

Resources:

- Existing: Excellent teachers in network and Child Care Connections partnership
- Needed: Trainings and workshops

Performance Metrics: CLASS Scores/Performance Profiles – all Preschool programs high proficient or excellent

Goal 3: Increase parent and community awareness on their ECE options when choosing a program for their children.

Strategies:

- Marketing Campaign - TV ads, Radio ads, Digital Ads, Social media, Posters, flyers.
- Share Choosing Quality Child Care checklist.

Resources:

- Existing: Templates already exist for flyers, posters. Met with marketing team to create a new more informative TV ad.
- Needed: Update flyers and posters.
- Survey parents on experience following Coordinated Enrollment.

Performance Metrics: survey data