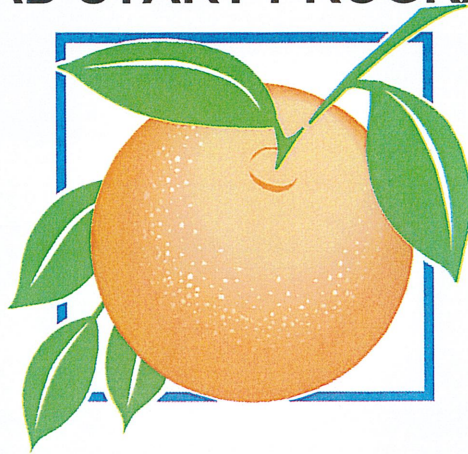
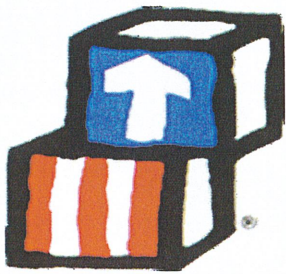


**ORANGE COUNTY  
HEAD START PROGRAM**



**APPLICATION FOR  
FEDERAL ASSISTANCE  
FIVE YEAR GRANT (YEAR 2)  
FY 2027-2028**



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*Grant No. 04CH013429, between the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start and Orange County in the amount of \$16,427,721 for the continued operation of the Head Start Program with the required non-federal match in the amount of \$4,406,930.*

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## **Orange County Head Start**

1. Orange County Head Start is not requesting a Locally Designed Option or waiver.
2. Orange County Head Start is not requesting Enrollment Reductions and Conversions.
3. N/A

### **Budget Justification**

#### **Program Operations**

##### *Proposed Family Services Administrator*

The proposed Family Services Administrator position represents a critical enhancement to the Head Start program's ability to deliver comprehensive, high-quality services to children and families. This role provides dedicated leadership and oversight of family services operations, ensuring full compliance with Head Start Program Performance Standards, grant requirements, and local regulations while strengthening coordination across departments and community partners . By centralizing responsibility for eligibility, enrollment, family engagement, and case management, the position will improve consistency, accountability, and service delivery across all program sites.

In addition, the role's focus on data analysis, continuous quality improvement, and staff supervision will support more informed decision-making and stronger outcomes for families, ultimately contributing to school readiness and long-term family stability.

Beyond compliance and operational improvements, this position will significantly enhance the program's ability to build meaningful partnerships and expand access to community resources. Through coordinated outreach, collaboration with local agencies, and oversight of family engagement strategies, the Family Services Administrator will help ensure that families receive the support they need to achieve self-sufficiency and well-being . The position also mitigates risk to the program by reducing the likelihood of compliance deficiencies, fragmented services, or funding interruptions, thereby protecting the integrity and sustainability of Head Start services.

The County will absorb the cost of this position by strategically realigning existing resources rather than relying on new funding streams. Specifically, the reclassification of an existing position into the Family Services Administrator role allows the County to enhance program capacity without creating a wholly new financial burden. This approach ensures fiscal responsibility while still addressing a critical operational need within the Head Start program. By leveraging current funding structures and prioritizing investments that strengthen compliance and service quality, the County demonstrates its commitment to both effective stewardship of public funds and the continued success of the families served.

*Personnel and Fringe*

The Fiscal Year 2027 budget reflects a continued commitment to fiscal discipline while maintaining core service delivery within the Head Start program and broader County operations. Based on guidance from the Fiscal Roundtable Meeting held on February 11, 2026, departments are expected to operate within a flat operating budget with a 0% increase, requiring all divisions to carefully evaluate existing services and identify efficiencies to remain within current funding levels. Any proposed increases to specific line items must be fully offset by reductions elsewhere, reinforcing a balanced and strategic approach to resource allocation.

Personnel costs will see moderate adjustments, including a 4.0% salary increase for Head Start employees, while key cost drivers such as FICA remain unchanged and retirement contribution rates are projected to increase based on preliminary estimates. Health insurance costs are budgeted at approximately \$19,000 per position, with employee premiums remaining stable, though employer contributions are still to be determined. Notably, recruitment and retention pay adjustments are not included in the FY 2027 budget, placing greater emphasis on managing workforce needs within existing compensation structures.

Overall, the FY 2027 budget strategy prioritizes sustainability, accountability, and the effective use of existing resources. For the Head Start program, this approach underscores the importance of maximizing current funding, maintaining compliance, and ensuring that high-

quality services continue to be delivered to children and families without reliance on additional County-funded expansions.

### *Budgeted Categories*

Budgeted supplies include instructional materials, classroom consumables, child development assessment tools, and hygiene products. Based on findings in the Community Assessment regarding food insecurity and health issues, OCHS prioritizes adequate hygiene and nutritional supplies to support overall child wellness. Purchases include child-safe furniture, educational technology tools, and playground materials that foster safe and engaging learning environments. Classroom supplies include educational materials, manipulatives, paper goods, and art supplies. Health and safety supplies include PPE, thermometers, first aid, and sanitation supplies. Administrative supplies can include computers, toner, office consumables while child nutrition supplies support meal service items, utensils, serving containers for example. Supplies are budgeted based on historical usage, enrollment levels, and regulatory standards.

OCHS contracts with licensed service providers for mental health consultation, dental screenings, health and nutrition services, and disabilities evaluation. These contracted professionals ensure timely services for children and families and meet all Head Start Performance Standards. Additionally, partnerships with Orange County Public Schools (OCPS) and local agencies allow OCHS to extend its reach in delivery services, particularly for dual-enrollment children and children with special needs.

All contractual services are entered in HSES within the "Contractual" budget category. Any contract exceeding \$250,000 is listed as an individual line item, accompanied by a brief description of the services provided, as required by the Head Start Application Instructions. This ensures compliance and prevents consolidation of contract amounts that could lead to application returns.

Contractual services include mental health consultants (licensed practitioners), screening services (hearing, vision, developmental), IT & data support (maintenance of

ChildPlus, tech upgrades); facilities Maintenance (cleaning, pest control, security for leased sites) and interpreter Services.

Facility-related expenses include rent for leased centers, utilities, and routine maintenance. No new construction plans for this application. These improvements support child safety, comply with federal and local regulations, and ensure high-quality early learning environments. There are no construction or renovation activities included in this application.

The Other category supports all other program needs from: parent engagement events, training materials and workshops, outreach and marketing for ERSEA and other engagement activities. Staff wellness and retention activities, audit Fees and licensing costs and staff and parent background screenings also are supported. These costs are allowable and necessary to meet Head Start Act Section 642 and HSPPS Subpart F.

Shared costs are distributed proportionally based on program benefit. Indirect costs are calculated under the 10% de minimis rate, as approved by Orange County Government. Program leadership regularly monitors cost allocation to ensure compliance, accuracy, and transparency in all financial transactions. OCHS claims indirect costs at the federally approved through a cost allocation plan covering shared administrative expenses (HR, finance, IT support). The indirect cost base and rate a is included in the appendices.

The proposed budget is aligned with program goals and responsive to the findings of the Community Assessment. Each expenditure category has been carefully developed to ensure the highest impact for children and families, while also supporting continuous improvement and fiscal accountability. The budget supports quality staffing, robust services, and the infrastructure required to maintain full compliance with Head Start Performance Standards.

OCHS has developed a comprehensive budget for the 2027–2028 program year to support the delivery of high-quality, barrier-free access to early childhood education services to 1,536 Head Start-eligible children across 23 centers. This budget narrative provides a detailed justification for all proposed costs and demonstrates alignment with allowable cost principles,

reasonableness, and necessity in accordance with federal guidance and the delegation of signing authority authorized by the Director of Community and Family Services.

*Cost-of-living-adjustment*

The planned use of cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) funds if received will be to support salaries including on-call staff to support ratio in the classroom.

*Non-Federal Match*

Orange County Head Start (OCHS) continues to strengthen its mission through a robust network of community partnerships, financial support, and in-kind contributions that collectively enhance program quality and sustainability. The program anticipates approximately \$1,900,000 in in-kind and volunteer contributions, reflecting the active engagement of parents, former parents, and community volunteers, as well as donations of classroom materials and resources. Additional monetary donations totaling \$15,000 further supplement program needs, supporting classroom supplies, nutrition, and enriching field trip opportunities. These combined efforts demonstrate a strong culture of shared responsibility and community investment in the success of children and families served by OCHS.

A significant component of support comes from Orange County Government, which contributes approximately \$4,800,000 annually, primarily to fund personnel and ensure the delivery of essential services. This investment underscores the County's commitment to maintaining high-quality early childhood education and comprehensive family services. In collaboration with the Family Services Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) Program, OCHS also secures an estimated \$1,521,354 in funding, providing 540 instructional hours for approximately 530 children. This partnership enhances school readiness and expands access to early learning opportunities for eligible families.

OCHS further leverages partnerships with a wide range of community organizations to provide holistic support services. These collaborations include the Adult Literacy League, which strengthens parent literacy skills; the University of Central Florida, which provides nurse and

social work interns; and Florida Transitions, which supports children moving from Part C to Part B services under IDEA. Additional partners such as the Early Learning Coalition, Orange County Library System, Urban League, and Florida Department of Revenue contribute to early education coordination, parent training, workforce development, and child support services. Health and wellness needs are addressed through partnerships with organizations such as the Nemours Foundation, while financial literacy and employment support are provided through entities like VyStar Credit Union, PNC Bank, Goodwill Industries, and the YMCA of Central Florida, which also promotes water safety through swimming lessons.

Community engagement is further exemplified through the Foster Grandparent Program, where over 80 senior volunteers contribute more than 3,850 hours annually to support classroom instruction and student development. The County’s annual contribution of \$22,280 sustains this initiative, fostering intergenerational connections and enriching the educational environment. Programs such as A Gift for Teaching (AGT) also play a vital role by providing low-cost school supplies to high-need classrooms, directly benefiting student learning experiences.

In summary, OCHS meets its non-federal match requirement through a diverse combination of in-kind contributions, donations, County funding, and state-supported programs such as VPK. This comprehensive approach ensures the program’s continued ability to deliver high-quality, family-centered services while maximizing available resources. Through strong partnerships and strategic collaboration, OCHS remains dedicated to empowering children and families and promoting long-term success throughout Orange County.

Source of Non-Federal Match	Estimated Amount	Valuation Methodology
In-Kind and Volunteer Program	\$1,900,000	Amount expected to be collected from parents, former parents, and

		volunteers in the center, along with In-Kind donations to the classroom.
Donations	\$15,000	Various Donors
County Support	\$4,800,000	Salary Support
FS VPK Program	\$1,521,354	Provided by 540 hours per child (530)

*Enrollment Reductions and Conversions.*

OCHS is not requesting enrollment reductions or conversions for 2027-2028 FY.

*Equipment*

No major equipment purchases are anticipated for this grant cycle. OCHS defines equipment as tangible personal property with a per-unit cost of \$5,000 or more and a useful life of more than one year. For Fiscal Year 2027, no funds have been requested for equipment purchases, consistent with prior fiscal planning. However, established procurement procedures remain in place should equipment needs arise. Any equipment purchase exceeding \$10,000 will require the submission of three quotes along with appropriate supporting documentation, such as a scope of work, insurance, W-9 forms, and necessary departmental approvals, to the Orange County Family Services Department Fiscal Division. Upon receiving equipment, the Fiscal Program Manager will review the purchase, confirm funding availability within the Advantage system, and issue approval prior to final authorization by management. All purchase orders will be processed through the Fiscal Department, entered into the Advantage system, and routed to Procurement for issuance to the selected vendor. Additionally, all equipment with a value exceeding \$5,000 will be tagged and recorded for inventory control through the Property Accounting Department of the Comptroller to ensure accountability and compliance with County policies.

### *Training and Technical Assistance*

Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) funds support professional development. This includes early childhood education, best practices, mental health and wellness training, and digital literacy workshops for staff and families. These investments enhance staff capacity and contribute to improved child development and family engagement. Travel funds support staff attendance at required Head Start regional conferences and training events, in-county mileage reimbursement for family home visits, screenings, and outreach, staff participation in the Region IV Head Start Association Annual Conference, and compliance training.