

# Legislative Update

## Head Start Directors Meeting December 2007



# Legislative Update

## Funding for Head Start

President proposed to cut funding for Head Start by \$100 million.

This means that about 14,000 children could be cut from the program next year or significant service cuts will need to be made to program services.



# Specific Programs Hurt by President's Budget

- 1.4 million fewer families would be able to receive low income fuel assistance
- Eliminates Community Action Agencies
- Cuts funding for medical research
- Cuts \$500 million from Social Services block grant which funds child care, foster care, and child welfare services
- Cuts funding for services for children with disabilities
- Funding for community health centers/nutritious meals for seniors “Meals on Wheels”



# Tax Cuts for the Wealthy

## The Tax Policy Center at the Urban Institute From 2001 to 2006 Study

- Families in the top .1% of income or the very richest in the country received an average tax break of \$266,151
- The poorest families those served by Head Start received an average tax break of \$26



# Labor HHS Funding Bill

- Labor HHS bill would provide Head Start with a \$154 million increase in funding for fiscal year 2008
- Bill was vetoed by the President
- It takes a 2/3 vote of the House and Senate to override the veto
- November 16<sup>th</sup> the House fails to override the veto by 2 votes
- All members of the WA State Delegation voted to override the veto except for Congressman Hastings and Congresswoman McMorris Rodgers



# Head Start Reauthorization: Status

- Legislation passed Congress before Thanksgiving
- President has said that he will sign Head Start legislation/Signing Ceremony Today At the Rayburn House Office Building
- Next step will be the regulatory process/interpretation
- Mostly completed by Office of Head Start/Region X Office With Input and Comments by Head Start community



# Governance

- **Policy Council is restored, but the policy council will no longer have approval or disapproval over the hiring and firing of the director, fiscal director, and human resources director.**
- **Training mandated for both governing body and policy council**
- **Secretary will issue regulations on impasse policies for each program**
- **Governing body: 1 person with fiscal background, 1 person with legal background, 1 person with non-profit management.**



# Eligibility

- **55% of children must be below the poverty line**
- **35% of children can be between 100 to 130% of the poverty line**
- **10% of children can be over income**
- **Strong community needs assessment**
- **Must prioritize poorest children first**



# Eligibility – Homeless Children

- Specifies that homeless children are deemed eligible for Head Start services
- Homeless families can enroll while program waits for documents
- McKinney-Vento Act applies to Head Start programs



# Enrollment

- **Must be funded at 97% or the Secretary of HHS can recapture funding.**
- **Programs will receive training and technical assistance.**
- **Exceptions for serving large number of homeless families and special populations**



# Competition of Head Start Grantees

- **7 Member Panel selected by HHS to determine what is a high quality program**
- **No unresolved deficiencies**
- **Strengths and weaknesses of each program**
- **No federal funds for legal fees on appeals**



# Transportation

- 10% of quality funds can be used to meet transportation regulations
- Waivers Still Available
- Parent In-Kind for Transportation Still Not Resolved



## Collaboration and Coordination - State Level

- Establish State Advisory Councils
- \$100 million available for State Advisory Councils
- Expands the role of the state collaboration director
- 200 Centers of Excellence



# Infants and Toddlers (Early Head Start)

- 50% of any new expansion funds must go to Early Head Start providers
- Also allows programs whether you have an Early Head Start program or not to serve infants and toddlers (as long you follow same requirements and receive same training as Early Head Start providers)



# Professional Development— Teacher Degrees

- **50% teachers nationally must have BA by 2013 (No penalties)**
- **By 2011 all teachers must have an Associate Degree**
- **By 2012 CDA for teaching assistants and enrolled in an AA or BA program**



# Outcomes

## Program Performance Standards

- The National Reporting System is terminated.
- NAS panel to develop new assessment
- Program performance standards will be revised.



**WSA** Washington State Association  
of Head Start & ECEAP



# Training and Technical Assistance Funds

- 2.5% to 3% for training and technical assistance
- 20% for Early Head Start
- Of the remaining funds 50% for local programs
- 25% for a state based training system
- 25% for HHS to help programs meet the program performance standards



# Monitoring

- Requires the triennial review use a `risk-based assessment' system that is less focused on a checklist of more than 1,200 items, and more focused on a broad view of program quality service delivery and sound fiscal management.
- Includes new requirements regarding the qualifications of the review team in order to respond to serious concerns about the qualifications of the members of the review teams.
- Better training for review members
- Follow up reviews
- Reviews every 3 years
- Both good and bad



# Voter Education

- No federal funds can be used for voter education activities
- But outside community organization can register parents to vote during hours of operation



# State Issues

- **Short Session**
- **Governor reluctant to spend significant amount of money.**
- **State Lawmakers interested in doing some things around early education**
- **Child care subsidies, Quality Rating and Improvement System, Collective Bargaining, Home Visiting, and Head Start/ECEAP Linkage**



# Head Start/ECEAP Linkage Proposal

- Both Head Start and ECEAP programs would receive same amount of funding in exchange for meeting all the Head Start program performance standards.
- State would maintain control and oversight over state dollars. Federal government would maintain control over federal dollars.
- Proposal would be 1) phased in over a certain number of years; 2) ECEAP programs would receive extensive training during the phasing in process; and 3) will find ways for ECEAP programs to maintain level of flexibility.
- Goal is to increase quality programming to children and families by raising standards and creating efficiencies. Want to lift all boats by taking the best of Head Start and ECEAP.



# Head Start/ECEAP Linkage Proposal

## Potential Gains:

1. More intensive services to children.
2. More educational programming for children and families. (448 for HS to 320 for ECEAP)
3. Greater efficiency in dually funded programs.
4. Better coordination of services/less duplication of services
5. More support for special populations such as foster care and homeless families
6. Higher Income Eligibility (130% vs. 110%)
7. Coordinated training opportunities
8. Stronger accountability and monitoring
9. Better tracking and monitoring of services.
10. Stronger public awareness, recognition and support for all of Early Learning.



# Head Start/ECEAP Linkage

- Held 3 conference calls with members of WSA community
- Received comments via e-mail
- Want to ensure that all voices are heard and that everyone part of the process
- Met with coalition partners and Rep. Ruth Kagi, Senator Kaufman, and Speaker Chopp who are spearheading this effort.
- Want to phase in standards, make sure there is still some flexibility where needed, and provide real training opportunities.
- Want to be respectful of ECEAP only programs.
- Putting outline of proposal in December
- Bill introduced in January



# Contact Information

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