

EXPAND SUPPORT FOR HEAD START (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

shoulder further financial burden. Without additional funding, California Head Start centers would be forced to cut thousands of children from their attendance rolls and would have to choose between lowering program standards and closing more than 88 classrooms. This is unacceptable. It's unfair to these children who desperately need this schooling.

Take the case of Jenny, a four year-old preschooler from Orange County. Jenny was quiet and withdrawn when she first went to Head Start. Her family was homeless, and without stable housing it was difficult for Jenny and her siblings to make and maintain friends.

Jenny was in Head Start for several months. She had her health screened by program nurses, who determined that she was underweight. Jenny was assigned to a nutritionist and a mental health specialist who worked with her family. She began to open up to her young peers and to teachers, who recalled that Jenny was imaginative and loved to play house. During her time at Head Start, Jenny was assessed twice. Tests showed that the little girl made gains in everything from reading and math to emotional and physical development. But Jenny's family was forced to move across town. Jenny had no way to get to Head Start and had to drop out of the program. This is a personal tragedy for Jenny and her family. Unfortunately, Jenny is not alone.

Many of our nation's children enter elementary school without the basic skills necessary to succeed. We know that low-income children disproportionately start school behind their peers - they are less likely to be able to count to 10 or to recite the alphabet. By the spring of their kindergarten year, Head Start graduates are able to meet national standards in reading and writing.

It's clear that Head Start sets a strong foundation for a lifetime of learning. We need to make sure this important program continues to stay strong. So in addition to increasing funding, we must also offer incentives to attract the best and the brightest to be Head Start teachers.

Many Head Start programs across the country, including in California, are losing qualified teachers to local school districts, in part, because the pay is better. Low pay, combined with rising student debt, makes it increasingly difficult to attract and retain highly qualified Head Start teachers. Recently enacted comprehensive higher education law forgives federal student loans for individuals who have served in public service for 10 years. This law expands on a proposal that I have been working on for several years, and I am hopeful that it will encourage many more men and women to enter and remain in Head Start classrooms.

We must do all we can to ensure that Head Start continues to provide high quality programs to enhance the lives and help secure the futures of low-income children. They deserve it.

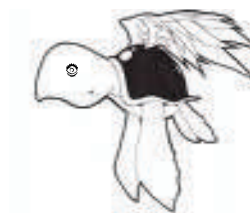
Pasadena-Star News, March 10, 2008

APRIL 2008

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1 Mike/Kevin at Elk Valley	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13 Self-Assessment Week	14	15	16	17	18 CRIHB Board Meeting	19
20	21	22	23	24	25 PC Mtg. Santa Rosa	26
27	28	29	30			

MAY 2008

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2 Director's Call	3
4	5	6	7 Outcomes Due	8	9 Health Call	10
11 Mother's Day	12	13	14	15	16 PC Teleconf	17
18	19	20	21	22 Cold Spring & Elk Valley Grad	23 Lytton Grad	24
25	26 Memorial Day	27	28	29	30	31 1st Steps Grad June 5th



THE FLYING TURTLE

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 3 APRIL 2008

EXPAND SUPPORT FOR HEAD START BY SENATOR DIANNE FEINSTEIN



ONE of the best ways to give a low-income child a jump start in life is through the federal Head Start program. Head Start provides some of the nation's most impoverished children with essential skills to get them ready for kindergarten, such as being able to count to 10, recite the alphabet, and recognize shapes and colors.

Unfortunately, Head Start has been chronically shortchanged. For the past six years, funding has lagged below the rate of inflation - resulting in an 11 percent real cut to programs. That's why some Head Start centers have been forced to cut back on school hours, reduce staff and slash transportation services for students. In addition, less than half of eligible preschool-age children in California are enrolled in preschool, in part, because parents don't have the money to pay for it.

We must reverse this harmful trend.

After years of cuts and flat funding, President Bush has proposed a slight two-percent increase in funding for Head Start in next year's federal budget. But Congress needs to provide more. The increase won't cover one year of cost-of-living expenses for Head Start centers. It's not enough to restore six years of budget cuts and flat funding and pay for the program's new requirements - including expanding the numbers of eligible children and increasing teacher education standards. These new requirements will improve Head Start. But unless they are adequately funded, Head Start centers across the nation will

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HEALTH & DISABILITIES SKINNY BY KEVIN NEIDICH

Did you know?

The following questions and answers are "Policy Clarifications" listed on the Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC) website, managed by the Office of Head Start. For more policy clarifications, log on to <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ohs/eclkc/index.html>.

Can a Head Start program begin to provide services to a child, including screenings at a Health Fair, before the program year begins? Yes, once a child has been enrolled into the program, the program can provide services to a child. This could include screenings or immunizations at a Health Fair, an initial home visit by Head Start staff, or other pre-entry services.

Can a child be temporarily excluded from attending Head Start classes until they show proof of an appointment for their annual medical or dental exam required by the State Medicaid\EPSDT periodicity schedule? No. Head Start children can not be temporarily excluded from attending classes because they are not up-to-date on a schedule of well child care, including annual medical or dental exams. However, if a state prohibits a child from entering a child care center until they have an annual medical or dental exam, in these situations a program would have no choice but to not allow the child to attend classes until the child had received the required examination(s).

What is the Head Start program's responsibility if a child is due to have a physical or dental examination, as required by the state Medicaid Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) program, 90 calendar days after the child's entry into the Head Start program? 45 CFR 1304.20(a)(1)(ii)(A) requires that Head Start programs work in partnership with the parent to ensure that the child continues to follow the recommended schedule for well child care as outlined by the state Medicaid EPSDT program. Head Start programs can develop systems that ensure regular communication between staff and parents occurs so that parents are aware of the need to keep their child up-to-date and that parents can inform staff about support services they may need, such as transportation, child care, etc., in order to keep medical and/or dental appointments.

MANAGEMENT MUMBO-JUMBO BY MIKE MELENDEZ

With the new Head Start act in place, local programs, state associations, regional networks and national associations such as National Indian Head Start Directors Association (NIHSDA), National Head Start Association (NHSA) and California Head Start Association (CHSA) are all in motion trying to clarify and debating the intent of Congress and the new direction envisioned for Head Start.

This year, as in 2007, Congress and the President are likely to have a contentious debate about the appropriate level of overall funding for "appropriated" programs – the programs funded through the annual appropriations process, including most education, environmental, veterans, defense, and transportation programs, among others. The President's new budget provides \$15 billion less for domestic appropriated programs in Fiscal Year 2009 than will be needed to maintain current levels of service in these programs (i.e., to keep funding for these programs even with inflation). It can be difficult, however, for the public and policymakers to understand the implications of differing levels of funding for appropriated programs as a whole. Yet decisions on those overall funding levels have important implications for key public services.

On December 12, 2007, the President signed legislation reauthorizing Head Start, which provides comprehensive early education programs to more than 900,000 disadvantaged infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. The legislation, which received overwhelming bipartisan support in Congress, included policy changes designed both to enable the program to serve more low-income children, including underserved groups such as Native American children, children of seasonal and migrant farmworkers and infants and toddlers, and to improve program quality.

To meet these goals, the legislation authorized significant new resources for Head Start. Members of both parties spoke of the importance of giving more low-income children access to the program. However, Head Start's actual funding level each year is set in appropriations bills, and just two weeks after signing the reauthorization legislation, the President signed into law an omnibus appropriation bill that cut Head Start funding for fiscal year 2008, even before adjusting for inflation. The 2008 cut follows five years in which Head Start was repeatedly funded below the level needed just to keep pace with inflation. In 2008, funding for Head Start is 11 percent or \$893 million below the 2002 funding level adjusted for inflation. The final omnibus appropriations bill provided \$164 million less in Head Start funding than Congress had provided in the Labor-HHS appropriations bill that it passed earlier but then the President then vetoed.

Congress has been working on a bipartisan basis on a Head Start reauthorization bill for five years. The bill signed into law by the President in December 2007 garnered strong bipartisan support – it passed the Senate 95-0 and the House 381-36. The legislation includes calls for increased funding and new quality standards that included:

- Increases the authorized funding level for Head Start from \$7.35 billion in 2008 to \$7.995 billion in 2010. The authorized funding level for 2009 is \$7.65 billion. This is \$623 million above the level the President's budget proposes for 2009.
- Expand access – if funds are available – to Head Start programs for a variety of groups, including: infants and toddlers, children with incomes between 100 and 130 percent of the poverty line, children of migrant and seasonal farmworkers and Native American children.
- Increase the number of Head Start programs that provide full-day services, if funds are available.
- Invests in program quality and sets new teacher standards. Under the bill, 40 percent of any funds remaining after Head Start programs are provided with a cost-of-living adjustment in their grant and some additional funds are directed to programs for American Indian/Alaska Natives and children of seasonal and migrant workers are directed to various quality enhancements. This includes increasing teacher salaries so that Head Start programs can meet the new requirements that teachers in center-based programs have at least a bachelor's degree by 2013.
- Promotes collaboration among early education programs by requiring states to establish State Advisory Councils on Early Education and Care and directing funds for collaboration efforts and training programs.

These improvements require increased investments. They certainly cannot be achieved with declining resources. Recognizing this fact, Congress increased Head Start's authorized funding level as part of the reauthorization. After years of cuts and flat funding, President Bush has proposed a slight two-percent increase in funding for Head Start in next years federal budget but Congress needs to provide more.

LYTTON FIRST STEPS GRAND OPENING! BY ANDREA BLACKMAN

On February 25th, Lytton First Steps hosted a blessing event to commemorate the center's grand opening. CRIHB was very fortunate to have Anita Silva, CRIHB 2007 Honored Elder, provide the prayer and speak to the children, families, and community members in attendance. Mrs. Silva was previously a CRIHB board member and is still an active member of the Traditional Health Committee. She is an icon in Sonoma County and is very well respected in the Indian Community.

Also in attendance were Margie Mejia, Chairperson of Lytton Rancheria, along with council members and Lisa Miller, the Tribal Administrator. Wright School District Superintendent, Casey D'Angelo, and J.X. Wilson Elementary School Principal, Jane Futrell, were also in attendance.

Children provided the entertainment by way of singing and then snacks and mingling followed. The event was a success and a wonderful way to culminate a long year of planning, start-up, and hard work. Thank you to all who participated!

Lytton First Steps is funded solely by the Lytton Rancheria Band of Pomo Indians and administered by the CRIHB. The program is modeled after Head Start and serves twenty children in Sonoma County.

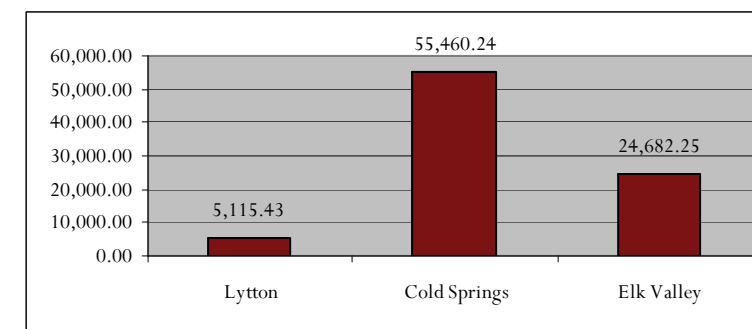


Staff L-R: TA Erica Hernandez, TA/FSW Demetria Mikel, and Teacher/Site Supervisor Dawn Rash

IN-KIND UPDATE BY ANDREA BLACKMAN

In-kind total as of April 2008 is \$85,633—which includes a minimal amount of in-kind collected by the central office. This total is alarmingly low for this time of year and can probably be attributed to the new restriction on claiming transportation as in-kind. Last year, CRIHB had well over \$20,000 in parent transportation time for the three centers, and additional claimed in mileage. Unfortunately, OHS does not allow grantees to claim transportation any longer. This means that programs (including CRIHB Central) must get creative and busy finding alternative means to earn in-kind. **Please make every effort to implement the ideas below in these last few months of school:**

- At the next parent meeting, get commitments from parents for volunteer duties. Let them know you always need extra hands in the classroom and try to get each parent to commit to at least one day volunteering at school. Write these on a calendar during the committee meeting and post copies of the calendar on the parent board and classroom door.
- Invite parents to stay after and help clean, plan for tomorrow, etc.
- Put a list on the door for ingredients for parents to donate for the following week's meals or supplies for the following week's activities. For children who are transported by bus, send this list home.



SELF-ASSESSMENT SEASON! BY ANDREA BLACKMAN

The self-assessment is a process required by the Head Start Performance Standards -1304.51(i)(1)- by which grantees must evaluate their effectiveness and progress in meeting and implementing Federal regulations.

Self-assessment season is well underway. All materials have been developed, invitations are out, and teams are formed. Andrea Blackman, CRIHB Education Coordinator and facilitator of the program's self-assessment, has already carried out team trainings for the Cold Springs and Lytton programs. Delfie Danner, Site Coordinator for Elk Valley, will conduct training for the Elk Valley team on April 14th.

Teams usually consist of three members: one staff member, one Policy Council member, and an additional parent. The self-assessment toolkit is developed using the most recent Federal protocol and includes interview questions, checklists, and a summary workbook.

The self-assessment will be a week long event and will begin on April 14th for all centers and CRIHB central. A report will be presented to the CRIHB Board of Directors at the July quarterly meeting. All staff, PC members, and self-assessment teams members will receive a copy of the report.