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## JANUARY 2008 Update

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### **Head Start FY08 Appropriations: \$10.6m CUT!**

After weeks of political wrangling, the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate finally passed a 2008 federal budget just a couple of days before adjourning for the holiday break Dec. 21. President Bush signed the Budget Act as he traveled to Texas for the holidays. This Federal Budget is of significant consequence to Head Start programs that have experienced a cumulative 11% reduction in spending since 2002 when factoring inflation. However, Head Start is not alone, the President committed in February 2007 that he would hold all non-security, discretionary spending below FY 07 levels. The President's original budget request for Head Start was \$86m cut.

*According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, "over recent months, federal policymakers considered measures to expand children's health coverage, strengthen Medicare, make new investments in areas like education and medical research, and extend tax relief — while maintaining fiscal discipline. Congress and the President ultimately failed to agree on the first three of these items, however, and the fourth (Alternative Minimum Tax relief) was enacted only after Congress bowed to the President's demand that it not be paid for".*

*"At the President's insistence, Congress cut billions of dollars in funding for domestic appropriated programs it had planned to provide for 2008. For some programs, Congress eliminated proposed funding increases; for others, it reduced funding below the 2007 level, adjusted for inflation".*

*"The programs affected include Head Start, which will be cut by an amount equal to the cost of serving 26,500 children. When combined with cuts made in previous years, this means Head Start funding will have declined 11 percent since 2002, after adjusting for inflation. Local Head Start programs must deal with funding cuts by serving fewer children, reducing teacher salaries, scaling back educational and health services, and/or cutting back on classroom materials."*  
(12/21/07)

### **Head Start Act Reauthorized**

On December 12th after years of discussion and debate, President Bush signed the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007. At the signing, the president expressed disappointed in the cancellation of the National Reporting System, was critical of the spending

authorizations and lack of protection for faith-based organizations to have “religious–hiring autonomy”.

Learn More about the 2007 Head Start Reauthorization: **NHSA Legal Advisory Service Audioconference is scheduled for Tuesday, January 8, 2008, 3-4:30 pm EST.** This 90-minute interactive conference call with the leading Washington, D.C. legal team in federal grants will provide you with the specifics of navigating both new and existing law. In particular, they will be discussing the recent Head Start reauthorization, including its immediate effects on Head Start programs in terms of new governance requirements, enrollment, re-competition, and more. Join Washington, D.C. legal team of Ted Waters and Zoe Beckerman to learn how your program will be affected and what you must do to prepare for it. To register for the Audioconference go to [www.nhsa.org](http://www.nhsa.org).

### **2008 Conferences Registration On-Line:**

This year we will be celebrating the unique contribution each of us brings to the children’s Head Start journey. Registration materials may be printed off the CHSA web site or you may register on-line at [caheadstart.org](http://caheadstart.org). Be sure to reserve your hotel rooms today – CHSA room rate at the Oakland Marriott is available until January 4, 2008 or until it is sold out.

The logo for "I Am Head Start" is written in a light blue, hand-drawn style font. The letters are slightly irregular and spaced out, giving it a friendly and personal feel.

#### **Key Conference Dates**

- **January 21 & 22 – Parent Conference Opening Session, Senta Green, Patti Kimbrell & Ron Herndon, Keynotes**
- **January 22 – Pre-Conference Institutes**
- **January 23 - 25 – Education Conference, Maurice Sykes & Pedro Noguera**
- **January 24 – Awards Luncheon**
- **January 25 – Public Policy Breakfast, with Author David Kirp**

### **2008 Photo-a-Palooza**

California Head Start Association is calling for photos of all your beautiful children, handsome staff and determined administrators! Each year at the annual CHSA Conference we love to open the event with a Photo-a-Palooza of the many faces in California Head Start programs.

This year our Parent & Education Conference theme is "I Am Head Start" We will be celebrating the unique contribution each of us brings to the children's Head Start journey. Please send us photos of children, parents, staff, community partners and others who are "Head Start" in your community. We encourage you to email them immediately to [paula@caheadstart.org](mailto:paula@caheadstart.org) and watch to see if yours makes our annual Photo-a-Palooza! **Please email photos by January 11th!**

### **California Preschool Study**

RAND Corporation released in November the first two of four reports in its California Preschool Study. The research reveals that the achievement gap evident among California’s K-12 students exists at the starting gate, when kids first enter kindergarten. The studies show that the school readiness gaps found in kindergarten closely match those gaps in achievement seen at the elementary school level, highlighting that groups of students who start school behind tend to stay behind.

According to RAND’s analyses of California STAR test data, almost two thirds of third graders did not meet state standards in English-language arts and more than 40 percent did not meet standards in math. Some groups of students are falling short by even larger margins: English learners, students whose parents did not graduate high school, African Americans, Latinos and economically-disadvantaged children. Looking at assessments at kindergarten of early reading

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skills and social skills, the research found a similar pattern. The research also examines rigorous studies of pre-k programs in other states that showed the substantial benefits of effective pre-k and concluded that effective pre-k helps narrow the achievement gap by addressing the readiness gap. View the studies and learn more at [www.rand.org](http://www.rand.org).

### **The 2008 California Report Card: The State of the State's Children**

Children Now annual report card highlights the generally poor health and education status of the state's children by assigning letter grades to key individual determinants, such as a C in health insurance, a C- in K-12 education and a D+ in obesity. These issues are undermining children's optimal development and putting the state's future at undue risk. The report also shows, however, that real progress on these issues can and should be made in 2008.

The most current and comprehensive set of indicators of California children's health and education status also are presented in the report, including:

- Only 47% of 3- and 4-year-olds attend preschool;
- One in three children is overweight or obese;
- Just 65% graduate from high school on time;
- 37% of children, ages 2-5, did not visit a dentist within the last year;
- Fewer than half of families can afford the basics of housing, child care, food, health insurance and transportation.

To receive a complete copy of The 2008 California Report Card: The State of the State's Children go to [www.childrennow.org](http://www.childrennow.org)

### **Head Start: Who's In/Who's Out:**

Head Start funding for Federal Fiscal Year 2008 is a cold reminder that as we look forward and call out the great work that we do with thousands of children, thousands more are left outside our classrooms, centers and agency doors. Services to children and families eligible for Head Start and Early Head Start have become more and more fragile. During this year (2008) CHSA would like to focus on the children and families who DO NOT receive services. We would like to include them in our profile, annual report and advocacy material. Please check with your staff to find out who is on your agency waiting list and if these families would be comfortable being interviewed by this office. We will not reveal names or actual circumstances beyond what is necessary to make our case on those who deserve service, would benefit from services, but are left out. I believe these could be powerful stories and given we have 42 years of success, yet fight every day for our funding – why not try another way to bring attention to the needs of those we are here to serve.

We will need to do interviews over the phone. CHSA can do the interviews – or local program staff may as well. Our hope is to gather 4 items from each family.

1. Description of the child and the family – who are they? family photos?
2. Expectations or hopes of the parents – why did they seek out Head Start services?
3. What is happening now in terms of school readiness – What are they doing at home to get ready for kindergarten?
4. Contact information for future or possible media follow-up. How can we reach them?