



WSA Washington State Association
of Head Start & ECEAP



WSA HAILS PASSAGE OF HEAD START REAUTHORIZATION LEGISLATION

THANKS SENATOR PATTY MURRAY FOR HER SUPPORT OF HEAD START

Kent, Washington//November 15, 2007/// The Washington Association of Head Start and ECEAP (WSA) Executive Director Joel Ryan and WSA Board Chair Janet Anderson released the following statement today on the passage of the Head Start reauthorization legislation:

“On behalf of the Head Start children and families in the state of Washington we want to thank the US Congress for their support of the Head Start program. We are especially grateful for the work of Senator Patty Murray who continues to demonstrate why she is a true champion for Head Start and the low income children and families the program serves.”

Established in 1965, Head Start is the most successful and longest running national school readiness program in the United States. Recent studies have found that children who have been through Head Start come to school ready to learn, are less likely to need special education classes, and are more likely to graduate from high school than children not able to participate in the program. Head Start has served over 25 million preschool-age children, infants, toddlers, and pregnant women since its inception. Currently, In Washington over 11,000 low income children benefit from Head Start.

WSA has been at the forefront of the Head Start debate the past 4 years. We are delighted to see that the final bill was completed in a bipartisan manner and will truly make the program better for Washington’s children.

The “Improving Head Start Act” makes the following positive changes:

- Increases the income eligibility so more working poor families are able to participate in the program;
- Terminates the National Reporting System—the SAT like test currently required in classrooms;

- Sets an important new goal that 50% of Head Start teachers must have a BA degree in early childhood education;
- Maintains the important role of parent involvement in the program by keeping the parent policy councils intact;
- Provides additional funding for Migrant and Indian programs and provides greater access for homeless and foster care families;
- Expands the Early Head Start program;
- Increases accountability by allowing HHS to close down poorly run programs;

We call upon the President to support and sign the *“Improving Head Start Act of 2007.”*

ABOUT WSA

The Washington State Association of Head Start/ECEAP (WSA) is a statewide organization composed of representatives from Head Start, Early Head Start, Migrant Head Start, Native American Head Start and the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP). The association has been in existence since the late 1960's, and was incorporated as a non-profit organization in 1986. To find out more information about WSA go to our web site at www.wsaheadstarteceap.com

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