



WSA Head Start/ECEAP Legislative Update September 10, 2010

It's time for another WSA Legislative Update!

Federal Watch

Head Start Funding In Jeopardy

Congress will be back in session shortly and one of the big tasks before they go home to campaign will be to keep the government up and running. This means passing some kind of budget-most likely a short term continuing resolution that would expire in December. The prevailing view still seems to be that Congress will meet after the November election in a lame duck session and try to work out a budget for fiscal year 2011. What is less clear is whether Head Start will receive enough money in that budget to avoid having to cut more than 1,000 kids in Washington State that are being served by stimulus spending. To put it succinctly,, if we as a Head Start community are not successful in getting a \$1 billion increase for Head Start, the gains we just made will be wiped out. [NHSA](#) is going to be sending out some educational pieces to help describe the impact of the impending cut and the action opportunities. For now you can contact your lawmakers in DC by going to www.supportheadstart.org and sending them an email.

Head Start Regulations Still Pending

So you remember how the Head Start Act of 2007 was signed into law. Usually the next step is for the executive agency in this case the Office of Head Start to put out some regulations. The regulations help make sense of the changes in the law and will include the revision of the program performance standards. However, things still seem to be glued up in DC. Last we heard is that the standards could be out at the end of the year. In the meantime, it seems that the re-competition proposed rule may be out in October. Stay tuned!

Training and Technical Assistance

A new contractor has been selected to provide T/TA services to Washington State. We will be part of a consortium that will also include Oregon and Idaho. The Region X Office of Head Start will put out a formal announcement shortly letting us know who the new contractor is. Expect this new variation to work somewhat differently. There will be two primary staffing functions: 1) staff will work directly with classroom teachers and others to improve educational quality; and 2) there will be grantee specialists who will directly with programs that are having some difficulties. The final piece of all this is the creation of the National Training Centers. These centers will be based across the country and will serve as a repository of information for local programs. Selection of these centers should be made by the end of September.

State Watch

Child Care Subsidy Cuts

In an effort to contain costs the Governor has proposed deep cuts to Work First and the working connections child care program. Working connections child care would see a change in eligibility from 200 percent of the poverty level to 175 percent. This change will mean that several thousand working families with kids will lose access to quality child care. The effects on families and kids are really bad. As you can imagine this is likely to lead to a loss of child care access for kids and may actually lead families to return to TANF. In addition, there is talk of even deeper cuts to child care in which only families on TANF would be eligible. Don't like what you are hearing? [Click here to comment on the proposed regulations.](#)

Across the Board Cuts

The Governor has also ordered all of her agencies to present proposals to reduce their expenditures by 4 to 7 percent. With the Department of Early Learning already stretched thin this means that programs like ECEAP, the Career and Wage Ladder, Child Care, and other state funded early learning programs could face cuts. We estimate that if ECEAP were cut by 7 percent, about 150 children will lose services just as children have already started their school year. If you oppose these cuts to ECEAP and early learning programs please email Leslie Goldstein, the Governor's early learning policy advisor, at Leslie.Goldstein@GOV.WA.GOV

New Rules on Subsidies

Starting this year Head Start and ECEAP families that also receive child care subsidies are eligible for a full 12 month authorization (with exceptions). DEL has already sent out a verification form to all ECEAP programs to help track the process.

WSA Fall Conference Fast Approaching: October 27th through October 29th

The WSA Fall Conference is taking place October 27th through October 29th at Campbells Resort in Chelan, WA. This year we will have special forums on the Elementary and Secondary Education Act reauthorization, Head Start reauthorization, and Senate bill 6759. Invited guests include Dr. Betty Hyde, director of DEL, Steve Barnett, Director of the [National Institute for Early Education Research](#), Nancy Hutchins, Region X Office of Head Start, and a great keynote motivational speaker, [Paul Figueroa](#). This will also be an opportunity to help set the advocacy goals for WSA for the upcoming legislative session. Registration will be available Monday!

Register to Vote

This election could have very serious implications for early learning and for low income families, both on the state and federal level. [If you haven't registered to vote, do it now!](#)