



May 21, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Skinner  
Chair, Senate Budget Committee  
State Capitol, Room 5019  
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Phil Ting  
Chair, Assembly Budget Committee  
State Capitol, Room 6026  
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable John Laird  
Chair, Senate budget Subcommittee #1  
State Capitol, Room 4040  
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Kevin McCarty  
Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee #2  
State Capitol, Room 2036  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: May Revision Budget Request Proposal to support Head Start agencies in TK transition**

Dear Senator Skinner, Assemblymember Ting, Senator Laird and Assemblymember McCarty:

I write on behalf of the nearly 150 Head Start grantees in California, serving over 100,000 children annually and their families, employing over 25,000 teachers and staff statewide. Collectively, they operate over 1,700 sites across California and serve the most at-risk children and families with early learning and wrap around services. We respectfully request support for a \$50 million appropriation in the 2021-22 budget for grants to ensure these local programs can continue to reach more children in Early Head Start, Head Start, Migrant and Seasonal Head Start, and American Indian Head Start.

The rapid expansion of Transitional Kindergarten to serve all four-year olds has serious implications for Head Start programs. Four-year olds constitute nearly 60% of Head Start funding in California, putting a large percentage of a federal \$1 billion dollar investment at risk. Without additional fiscal support, that is equitable to the support provided to other parts of the mixed-delivery system, the ability of Head Start programs to accommodate this change will be jeopardized. Head Start programs are nationally recognized for high quality, whole-child, whole-family approach, and a foundation of increasing racial and economic equity.

This request is consistent with the CA Assembly Blue Ribbon Commission Report on Early Childhood Education, which specifically recognizes the critical role of Head Start in California's mixed delivery system and recommends state investment in Head Start. Local grantees must continue to meet federal requirements in order to continue receiving their federal funds. The change in the population of children served as Transitional Kindergarten is expanded, necessitates planning, technical assistance, and additional funding.

**Our proposal for state grants proposes the following structure:**

- Agencies with one or more Office of Head Start (OHS) grants (including Head Start, Early Head Start, American Indian/Alaskan Native and Migrant & Seasonal grants) would be eligible to participate;
- Families with income less than 200% of the federal poverty level for their family size, *or* who would qualify for WIC, SNAP, CalWorks, SSI, or Free/Reduced Meals could be funded by the state grant;
- Grants may be used to:
  - Support the 20% funding match required by the federal grant to build agency capacity, recruit and retain a growing workforce, and identify more Head Start eligible families; and/or

- Expand services to serve more children in families and provide expanded, non-traditional hours of care.

The attached one-pager provides more detail on grant administration, selection, oversight and management.

Thank you for your consideration. Please contact me at [chris@headstartca.org](mailto:chris@headstartca.org) or our legislative advocates Jamie Mauhay at [jamie@headstartca.org](mailto:jamie@headstartca.org) and Andrea Ball [andrea@ballfrostgroup.com](mailto:andrea@ballfrostgroup.com) for additional information.

Sincerely,



Christopher Maricle  
Executive Director  
Head Start California