

# California Legislature

December 17, 2021

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  
Governor, State of California  
State Capitol, First Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95814

## **RE: 2022-23 Budget Proposal for Head Start Programs**

Dear Governor Newsom:

This letter is to request a \$50 million appropriation in the 2022-23 budget to support local Head Start programs as they navigate the impacts of expansion of transitional kindergarten (TK) and the continued challenges of recruiting, retaining, and adequately compensating staff to serve California's most vulnerable young children and their families.

As longtime champions for early childhood programs, the members of the Legislature were happy to work with your administration to advance universal TK and additional supports for California state preschool and child care programs. As we look ahead to the 2022-23 budget process, we want to make sure local Head Start programs receive the resources they need to succeed in California's changing landscape of early education.

Head Start programs are a vital component of our state's mixed delivery system. They operate more than 1,700 sites across the state and serve 100,000 of the most at-risk children and their families with early learning and comprehensive, wrap-around services such as nutrition, health, and social services. Head Start programs are nationally recognized for their high quality, whole-child, whole-family approach and for their foundational principles of increasing racial and economic equity.

The state's historic expansion of transitional kindergarten to serve all four-year olds has serious implications for Head Start programs. As more 4 year-olds enroll in TK, Head Start will need to shift to serving a larger population of 0-3 year olds. This age group requires lower student-teacher ratios, smaller class sizes, and specialized facilities that will significantly increase costs for Head Start. Further, programs whose age ranges have changed will need to re-apply for funding and receive approval from the federal Office of Head Start, which places new demands on staffing and facilities.

Without additional funding that equals the support provided to local educational agencies and other segments of the mixed-delivery system, Head Start programs will face serious challenges adjusting to the expansion of TK. California cannot afford to lose the \$1 billion in annual federal grants or the critical services for children and families most severely affected by the pandemic. For these reasons, we request your strong consideration and inclusion of a \$50 million

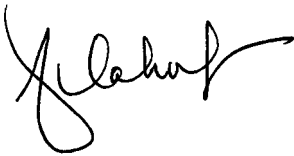
appropriation in the 2022-23 January Budget to invest in the capacity of Head Start programs. These grants will build local program capacity for recruiting and retaining staff, planning and serving younger children, and identifying more Head Start eligible families.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. If you have any questions, please contact Shannon Flores, Legislative Aide in the Assembly Majority Leader's Office at [shannon.flores@asm.ca.gov](mailto:shannon.flores@asm.ca.gov) or (916) 319-2047.

Sincerely,



Assembly Majority Leader Eloise Gómez Reyes  
47<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Akilah Weber  
Assemblymember, 79<sup>th</sup> District



Bob Wieckowski  
Senator, 10<sup>th</sup> District



Ash Kalra  
Assemblymember, 27<sup>th</sup> District



Brian Maienschein  
Assemblymember, 77<sup>th</sup> District



Blanca Rubio  
Assemblymember, 48<sup>th</sup> District



Buffy Wicks  
Assemblymember, 15<sup>th</sup> District



Bob Archuleta  
Senator, 32<sup>nd</sup> District



Carlos Villapudua  
Assemblymember, 13<sup>th</sup> District

Cecilia Aguiar-Curry  
Assemblymember, 4<sup>th</sup> District

Heath Flora  
Assemblymember, 12<sup>th</sup> District

Connie Leyva  
Senator, 20<sup>th</sup> District

Janet Nguyen  
Assemblymember, 72<sup>nd</sup> District

Cristina Garcia  
Assemblymember, 58<sup>th</sup> District

Jim Wood  
Assemblymember, 2<sup>nd</sup> District

Dave Cortese  
Senator, 15<sup>th</sup> District

Josh Newman  
Senator, 29<sup>th</sup> District

Laura Friedman  
Assemblymember, 43<sup>rd</sup> District

Freddie Rodriguez  
Assemblymember, 52<sup>nd</sup> District

Lisa Calderon  
Assemblymember, 57<sup>th</sup> District



Luz Rivas  
Assemblymember, 39<sup>th</sup> District



Mike Gipson  
Assemblymember, 64<sup>th</sup> District



Marc Berman  
Assemblymember, 24<sup>th</sup> District



Monique Limón  
Senator, 19<sup>th</sup> District



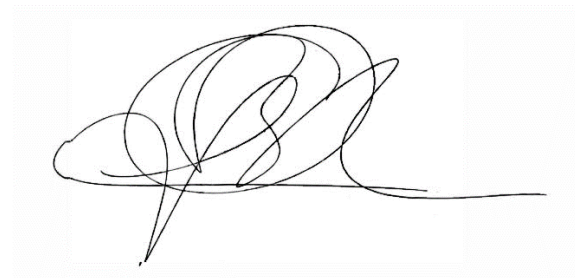
Marc Levine  
Assemblymember, 10<sup>th</sup> District



Robert Rivas  
Assemblymember, 30<sup>th</sup> District



Maria Elena Durazo  
Senator, 24<sup>th</sup> District



Rosilicie Ochoa Bogh  
Senator, 23<sup>rd</sup> District



Mark Stone  
Assemblymember, 29<sup>th</sup> District



Mia Bonta  
Assemblymember, 18<sup>th</sup> District



Rudy Salas  
Assemblymember, 32<sup>nd</sup> District



Miguel Santiago  
Assemblymember, 53<sup>rd</sup> District



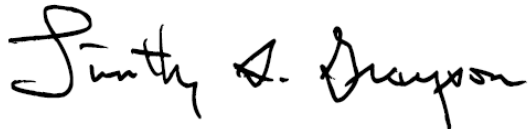
Sabrina Cervantes  
Assemblymember, 60<sup>th</sup> District



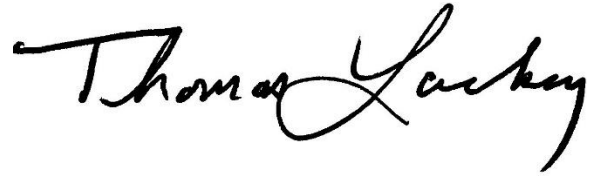
Sharon Quirk-Silva  
Assemblymember, 65<sup>th</sup> District



Suzette Valladares  
Assemblymember, 38<sup>th</sup> District



Timothy Grayson  
Assemblymember, 14<sup>th</sup> District



Tom Lackey  
Assemblymember, 36<sup>th</sup> District



Tom Umberg  
Senator, 34<sup>th</sup> District



Wendy Carrillo  
Assemblymember, 51<sup>st</sup> District