

# AZHSA Quarterly Meeting

Tommy Sheridan | Deputy Director | November 19, 2020



# NHSA's Vision

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## **To Lead**

To be the untiring voice that will not be quiet until every vulnerable child is served with the Head Start model of support for the whole child, the family, and the community.

## **To Advocate**

To work diligently for policy changes that ensure all vulnerable children and families have what they need to succeed.

# NHSA's Mission



**To coalesce, inspire, and support the Head Start field as a leader in early childhood development and education.**

**We are  
compelled to  
fulfill this  
mission by the  
promise of all  
possible  
outcomes:**

- One powerful, united Head Start voice
- A collegial, collaborative Head Start field
- Nonpartisan support of an increased federal commitment to Head Start
- Healthier, empowered children and families, and stronger, more vibrant communities

# NHSA COVID-19 Principles



## In these unprecedented times, NHSA pledges to:

1. Remain **committed to our core mission**, which is timeless
2. **Prioritize safety** above all else - for children, families, and staff
3. Acknowledge the **unique pressures Head Start staff** find themselves under - professionally and personally
4. Prioritize the needs of the **whole family and the whole child**
5. Lift up the **importance of comprehensive services** for both child and family
6. **Collaborate with new and old partners**, building new relationships and strengthening existing ones to support our community
7. Continue to prioritize our efforts with Capitol Hill to **secure necessary funds for Head Start**
8. Be **creative and innovative** in our approach - this unprecedented time calls for new thinking
9. Recognize that returning to pre-COVID routines and practices will not take place soon, and we will **continually re-evaluate the needs of programs, children, and families** and adjust our work accordingly.

**We acknowledge the future is unclear yet we remain unwavering in our work and commitment to you.**

# USA Trends

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- Country further divided by the election
- COVID cases surging everywhere and predictions of worse infections
- Hospital capacity a concern in many places
- Uncertainty about what the next few months hold in terms of Presidential transition
- Fundamental disagreement among all levels of decision makers about what is more important to address first - the economy or COVID
- Equity and disparity issues - the third biggest concern of voters

# What we hear from Head Start...

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- Continuing concern for the families' wellbeing – jobs, stress, stability, food insecurity, housing - all social determinants of health
- Programs are appreciating the operating flexibility they have been offered by OHS
- Fewer children enrolled in many cases
- COVID infections in programs
- Worries about staff health and wellness in general
- Disruptions of programs and families by fires, hurricanes, and other disasters
- Some programs are actively demonstrating their value to communities, others are struggling

# Currently at NHSA

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- Listening and communicating with the community; understanding both the continuing and changing needs
- First and foremost goal is to keep a unified community, focused on keeping Head Start strong and viable
- Reading the tea leaves about the new Administration's needs and planning how to best position Head Start as a part of the solution
- Looking to develop a narrative that communicates the current value of Head Start to communities and the nation
- Developing the strategy to make new allies in Congress

## How will we adjust our 2020 goals to position Head Start for the future?

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**Strengthen Head Start** – Address the pain points in the field and prepare Head Start for 2021 and beyond – published principles

**Strengthen the Head Start brand** – Create a convincing powerful narrative that conveys the benefits and uniqueness of Head Start

**Strengthen NHSA** – Make sure NHSA has the resources, knowledge and capacity to achieve the above goals



# The Political Situation

- **Presidential election**
  - Joe Biden narrowly elected
- **Senate**
  - Republicans in position to hold Senate
  - Final run-off for two seats in Georgia - including Head Start Alum Rev. Raphael Warnock
- **House**
  - Democrats fared worse than expected, maintain control of House
  - Several key Head Start champions retiring or defeated -
    - Chairwoman Lowey (D-NY), Rep. Donna Shalala (D-FL), Rep. Denver Riggleman (R-VA), Rep. Harley Rouda (D-CA)



# Key Government Affairs Priorities



## 1. **Transition to Biden Administration**

- a. Working with coalition partners on a letter to Biden transition team
- b. Clearly establishing Head Start as a priority for Biden admin and monitoring rumors around appointees

## 2. **COVID-19 Relief AND economic recovery**

- a. Updating our ask to reflect the real needs of Head Start
- b. Establishing the narrative around Head Start's role

## 3. **Getting to know the new Congress**

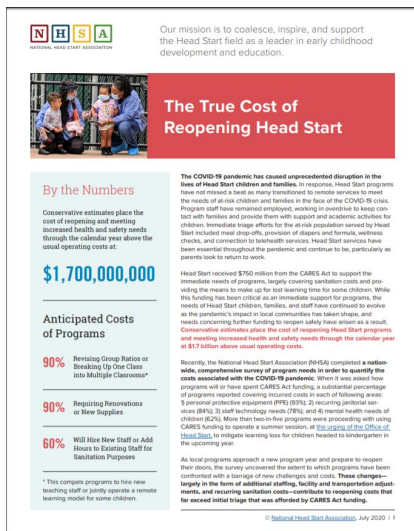
- a. Detailed analysis on opportunities and threats with new Members and new leadership in the new Congress
- b. Advocacy plans developing for NHSA and the Head Start community to hit the ground running!

## 4. **Preparing for a Head Start Reauthorization**

- a. Unclear when, but we must be ready!

# Fighting for Head Start

WE NEED YOUR  
PARTNERSHIP TO  
**SHAPE THE PUBLIC  
NARRATIVE** & BUILD  
THE CASE FOR  
HEAD START.



**\$1.7 billion estimated additional need** (at least)

- Staffing
- Sanitation
- Meals
- Caring for sick children

**Team NHSA is on it!**

- Congressional sign-on letters
- 50 State Directors Tour
- State by state advocacy “zooms”
- Press outreach and hard push...

## Up Next:

House Democrats continue to call for a negotiation, but nothing is likely to occur until after thanksgiving...or even until next year.

# FY2021 Updates



## House

Passed a bill in the summer that includes:

- +\$1.5b for HHS
- +\$150m for HS/EHS
  - \$135m COLA
  - \$15m for M/S HS
- +\$100m for CCDBG
- +\$25m for Pre-school Development Grants

## Senate

Released a proposal in the summer that includes:

- +\$100m for HS/EHS
  - All COLA

All in all, a fine result!

## Next Steps

The path forward remains up in the air with COVID relief looming and electoral challenges still floating out there, but the negotiations are under way...

**Congress passed a Continuing Resolution until early December. Something must happen by then!**

# Thank you for your support!

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