



Florida Head Start Association

Excellence. Advocacy. Leadership.

DONATE

Help Support FHSA Actions by clicking the donate button above.



LETTER FROM FHSA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Each month I feel like there are so many reasons to celebrate and give thanks to everyone that works in Head Start. I know this past year has not been easy, but somehow you all continue to amaze me with the creative ways you can adapt and make it all happen.

I had the opportunity to travel in April and visit programs in the Florida panhandle with our Head Start Collaboration Director, Mimi Jefferson. We observed all the COVID protocols programs put in place and witnessed firsthand how much children are more resilient than adults.

We also saw programs supporting Child Abuse Prevention Month by hosting local activities and, of course, placing pinwheels around their centers. We had the opportunity to talk with their staff about what it has been like this past year and learn how FHSA can better support their needs. You can view highlights from these visits [here](#) or check them out in our [What's Happening Around the State](#) section on page 3.

Florida's 2021 Regular Legislative Session ended on Friday, April 30, at 2:40 p.m. Throughout the last 60 days, a significant number of bills crossed the finished line, including passing a record budget of \$101.5 billion, the largest in Florida history thanks to Federal pandemic relief dollars. To view a list of bills FHSA was tracking and their outcomes visit [Florida Legislative Wrap-Up](#) on page 4.

As we begin the month of May, let's recognize our teachers. Teacher Appreciation Week is May 2-8. Please take a moment to give them praise and thanks for their untiring and unwavering dedication. Let's face it, they have been through a lot this year and have taken on extra responsibility coordinating with others to ensure our most at-risk children and families' lives improve.

Until next time,

Wanda Minick
FHSA Executive Director

A GLIMPSE OF WHAT'S INSIDE:

[Letter from FHSA Executive Director](#)

[Updates from the Office of Head Start](#)

[Updates from Florida's HSSCO](#)

[What's Happening Around the State](#)

[Florida Legislative Wrap-up](#)

[Updates from NHSA](#)

[Additional Resources](#)

UPDATES FROM THE OFFICE OF HEAD START



[FY 2021 American Rescue Plan Funding Increase for Head Start Programs ACF-PI-HS-21-03](#)

On March 11, 2021, President Biden signed into law the American Rescue Plan Act, 2021 (ARP). The \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan includes \$1 billion for Head Start programs. All Head Start, Early Head Start, and Early Head Start-Child Care (EHS-CC) Partnership grantees are eligible to receive additional funds proportionally based on funded enrollment levels. [Click here](#) to read the full PI for guidance on the use of funding.

#SleeveUp4HeadStart

Protecting our families and communities is the most important thing we can do right now.

But, to do this, we need to increase our vaccination numbers. We have heard loud and clear there is vaccine hesitancy. Take a moment to review the information posted on [HHS.gov](https://www.hhs.gov) regarding vaccine safety.

Have you considered bringing a vaccination site to your Head Start program? The Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA) may be able to help. HRSA has partnered with the CDC to ensure equity in COVID-19 vaccine distribution is occurring. Your program could potentially help bridge that gap. [Visit this link](#) to see if there are health centers participating in your area.

Let's do this together!

- So we can protect one another against COVID-19.
- So we can move forward together.



- [COVID-19 Vaccines: Answers to Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [#SleeveUp4HeadStart Social Media Toolkit](#)
- NHTSA Blog Post: [How Head Start is Supporting COVID-19 Vaccination Nationwide](#)



UPDATES FROM HSSCO

The Office of Head Start (OHS) announced on April 27, 2021, that they had selected Ms. Maria Goss as the Regional Program Manager (RPM) for Region IV, effective Monday, May 10, 2021.

Ms. Goss has over 30 years of experience in early childhood programming, with 29 of those years working directly in Head Start. Her work history includes progressive leadership positions starting as a Home-Based Manager and progressing through the years to Director. Her work experiences have exposed her to various programs, including Head Start, Early Head Start, and Early Child Care Partnerships, and within many organizations, including community action agencies, educational systems, and state government. She also has experience working directly for a school system in Ohio. She has extensive knowledge of the Head Start Program Performance Standards, federal and state blended Child Care Development Funds (CCDF), and Community Development funds. She also has familiarity working with two Regional Offices (Regions IV and V), which will give her multiple perspectives on the position. Ms. Goss possesses a master's degree in Organizational Leadership and a bachelor's degree in Rehabilitation Services.

The Florida Head Start community welcomes and congratulates Ms. Goss for being part of our team. We certainly look forward to collaborating with her and extend an open invitation to the Sunshine State.

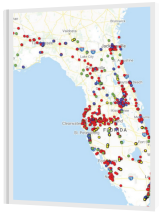
The HSSCO and FHSA will host its monthly Directors group call on **May 13 at 10:00 a.m.** Check your inbox for meeting details. Click on the hyperlinks below for more information on these events.

- [May 2-8, 2021 Teacher Appreciation Week](#)
- [National Mental Health Month](#)

Have you viewed the OEL Parent pages? Each Month they bring activities for families and childcare providers. [Click here](#) to access the pages.

What's Happening Around the State

Let's travel around the state.



There were lots of great activities happening in the month of April. Programs celebrated April Fools Day, Easter, Children's Week, Child Abuse Prevention Month, Autism Awareness, and Earth Day.

Check out this highlights reel created using photos from the visits Mimi and I had in April. This video also includes photos shared by our members from around the state. [Click here](#) to watch the video.

FHSA Directors Affiliate Group Monthly Check-In Call

First Tuesday of the month @
10:30 a.m.

For more details, call FHSA at
(850) 694-6477

**Save the Date
October 7-8, 2021
FHSA
Fall Leadership Training**

Thank You Corporate Partners and Sponsors

Platinum Level



Florida Head Start
State Collaboration Office

Gold Level



LENA[®]

Bronze Level



Lakeshore[®]



Florida Legislative Wrap-Up

Florida's 2021 regular legislative session wrapped up on Friday, April 30, at 2:40 p.m. Throughout the last 60 days, key education bills for early learning passed. The Governor will have 15 days to act on the legislation. Below is a list of a few bills FHSA was tracking.

[HB 419 Early Learning and Early Grade Success](#), Rep. Grall and Rep. Aloupis

This bill was signed into law on May 4, 2021, by Governor Ron Desantis. This bill passed unanimously in both the House and Senate and creates a state birth through 20 education system. The bill requires the Commissioner of Education to develop a coordinated screening and progress monitoring program for VPK through grade 3 students that provide outcomes and learning gains data for the VPK performance metric. To view the staff analysis of this bill, [click here.](#)

[HB 1349: Assistance Programs](#), Rep. Aloupis

The bill requires that parents who have an intensive services account or an individual training account be given priority for participation in the School Readiness program equal to parents receiving temporary cash assistance benefits and requires the Office of Early Learning (OEL) to coordinate with the University of Florida Anita Zucker Center for Excellence in Early Childhood Studies (Center) to analyze certain assistance programs. This bill passed and is awaiting the Governor's signature. You can read the staff analysis [here.](#)

[HB 7011 Student Literacy](#), Rep. Aloupis

This bill has also already been signed into law on May 4, 2021, by the Governor. The bill requires the implementation of a Voluntary Prekindergarten through grade 8 Progress Monitoring System beginning in the 2022-2023 school year. The system must be designed to provide Florida educators with sufficient, high-quality data to identify students with substantial deficiencies in reading and monitor the effectiveness of interventions through continuous data collection. To read staff analysis, [click here.](#)

[HB 575 Gold Seal Quality Care Program](#), Rep. Omphroy

This bill died in Appropriations on April 30th.

[SB 252 Child Care Facilities](#), Sen. Stewart

This bill creates the "Child Safety Alarm Act," requiring certain vehicles to be equipped with a reliable alarm system to ensure the safety of children being transported to child care facilities by January 1, 2022. This bill requires the Department of Children and Families to adopt by rule minimum safety standards for such systems and maintain a list of approved alarm manufacturers and alarm systems. This bill passed, awaiting signature from the Governor. To read staff analysis, [click here.](#)

[SB 380 Child Restraint](#), Sen. Perry

This bill died in the Tourism, Infrastructure & Energy Subcommittee on April 30th.

[SB 604: Dental Therapy](#), Sen. Brandes

This bill died in Health Policy on April 30th.

[SB 238- Medicaid Eligibility](#), Sen. Book

This bill died in Health Policy on April 30th.

[HB 645 - Postpartum Medicaid Coverage](#), Rep. Brown

This bill died in Finance & Facilities Subcommittee on April 30th.

[Head Start Applauds Congressional Champions Urging Robust FY22 Funding, May 3, 2021](#)

205 members of Congress on both sides of the aisle support funding to build up Head Start in fiscal year 2022

WASHINGTON, DC – The National Head Start Association (NHSA) today applauded the 205 members of Congress from both sides of the aisle, who reaffirmed their commitment to America’s at-risk children and families by urging robust funding for Head Start and Early Head Start in fiscal year (FY) 2022. Both Republicans and Democrats signed onto letters to House leadership, one led by Congresswoman Katherine Clark (D-MA), Congresswoman Lauren Underwood (D-IL), and Congressman Joseph Morelle (D-NY), and the other led by Congressman Steve Stivers (R-OH). The requested \$12.1 billion in FY22 funding in the letter led by Congresswoman Clark includes a cost-of-living adjustment for the Head Start and Early Head Start workforce and provides quality improvement funds to build on previous investments to promote healing from the trauma that has been compounded this past year. [Click here](#) to read the press release in its entirety.

[Head Start Applauds President’s Budget Proposal](#)

WASHINGTON, DC – The National Head Start Association applauded President Biden’s fiscal year (FY) 2022 budget proposal which increases funding for Head Start and Early Head Start by \$1.2 billion for a total \$11.9 billion. More broadly, the President’s proposal amounts to a 16% increase in discretionary funding, which also includes notable increases in a number of areas affecting Head Start programs and families: the Child Care and Development Block Grant (+\$1.5 billion), Preschool Development Grants (\$450 million total funding), WIC, housing supports, and Pell Grants. [Click here](#) to read the press release in its entirety.

The [Child Care for Working Families Act](#) was reintroduced by the Senate HELP Committee Chair Patty Murray (WA) and House Education and Labor Committee Chair Bobby Scott (VA). This is a broad bill that builds upon existing child care infrastructure while also creating a new universal preschool program. While there are some great provisions in the bill, especially related to the workforce, NHSA has not endorsed this legislation because it is not bipartisan and does not center around Head Start, despite Head Start’s proven record of success in building equity and access to high-quality early learning opportunities. NHSA will continue to work diligently with Chairs Murray and Scott to improve the bill as it possibly moves forward in Congress.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Calendar of Events](#)

[Employment Opportunities](#)

[Top 3@3](#)

LET'S STAY CONNECTED

Florida Head Start Association
111 N. Gadsden Street, Suite 200
Tallahassee, FL 32301
(850) 694-6477 www.FLHeadStart.org

