



Florida Head Start Association

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LETTER FROM FHSA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

When embarking on a new year, it's only natural to want a fresh start and an opportunity to reset and rejuvenate. How about let's start by revamping FHSA monthly newsletter. Over the past few years, it felt a little outdated, and time for a refresh while remaining relevant and a valuable member benefit—cheers to the new year and a new look. I hope you like it.

Another improvement I would like to see this year is our Head Start and Early Head Start programs sharing more of their stories. We want to highlight programs from around the state, how you all are continuing to be innovative in your practices, and how you are forging ahead into the next era in early childhood education. You can start by sending me an email at Wanda@FLHeadStart.org or add me to your monthly newsletters. I encourage you to follow FHSA on social media [Facebook](#), [@FLHSA](#), and [Twitter @FlaHeadStart](#) so we can all stay connected.

One of the first actions members took part in after the first of the year was to elect our newest member of the FHSA board of directors, Heidi Rand, Director of Early Learning Programs, Mid Florida Community Services Inc. Head Start & Early Head Start. Mrs. Rand previously served on the board, and we are thrilled to have her back. She brings extensive experience and knowledge through her leadership skills and a strong background in finance. We hope you will join us in welcoming Mrs. Rand back to the board.

The FHSA board of directors finalized its strategic plan adopting six new goals to focus on in the next few years. To view a copy of these initiatives, [click here](#).

Registration to attend FHSA 2021 Virtual Conference & Expo is now open. We hope you will join us. The Professional Development committee has planned an excellent training opportunity for you. Detailed information about this annual event can be found on page 2.

As we continue to combat COVID -19, I will leave you with these words of wisdom. Be positive; test negative.

Wanda Minick, Executive Director
FHSA

A GLIMPSE OF WHAT'S INSIDE:

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HEAD START LEADERS 2021

QUALITY FOCUSED  INNOVATION DRIVEN



FHSA Annual Conference & Expo
March 3-5, 2021

REGISTRATION OPEN!

Here's what Past Attendees have said about FHSA Annual Conference & Expo

"Great networking opportunities and knowledgeable speakers."

"FHSA always does an excellent job with their events."

"Sensational! Continue bringing engaging leadership development training."

Now's the time to secure your spot at FHSA virtual conference & expo March 3-5. This year's event will provide a total of 30 breakout sessions within five concurrent educational tracks. There will be something for everyone.



We are delighted to have Dr. Iheoma U. Iruka serve as this year's keynote

speaker. Dr. Iruka's keynote address, "Ensuring Head Start's role as an Engine for a Transformative, Anti-racist Early Childhood Agenda," will provide the perfect launch to **Head Start Leaders: Quality Focused & Innovation Driven.**

This year's event will provide ample opportunities to network and connect with other Head Start/Early Head Start leaders, colleagues, and educational partners.

Registration Fees:

FHSA Member - \$350

Non-Members - \$475

[Click here to Register](#)

Calling all Exhibitors! 

We invite all product and service providers who have a keen interest in connecting with Head Start programs to join us in our virtual expo hall.

This year's virtual expo hall provides exhibitors the opportunity to connect with attendees in various methods. We hope you will join us!

Virtual Expo Booth- \$525
Non-Profit Booth - \$150*

[Click here to Register](#)

UPDATES FROM THE OFFICE OF HEAD START



On February 1, 2021, The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation has prepared [new poverty guidelines](#) to determine Head Start and Early Head Start programs' income eligibility. Program staff is encouraged to refer to these resources when working with families.

New Acting Director of the Office of Head Start (OHS)

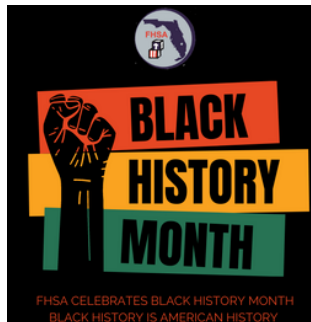
January 13, 2021, marked Dr. Deborah Bergeron's last day as Director of the Office of Head Start.

As of January 14, Ms. Ann Linehan has taken the reins serving as acting director. She has held senior management positions with OHS for 25 years and has served as the deputy director since 2011. We look forward to working with her during the transition with a new administration.



UPDATES FROM HSSCO

February is a short month but a very important one! I want to invite your program to participate in a couple of initiatives I have created unique to Florida's Head Start State Collaboration Office.



Black History Month:

- Think about an African-American who has inspired you and why. I will kick it off with an open "sharing moment" during the February 11th Director's call.
- Share any activities that your programs organize in celebration of Black History Month.

Love is Comprehensive-Testimonials: Head Start/EHS programs have been a lifeline to many families since 1965, but especially during this time of the Coronavirus Pandemic.

- Submit a video/videos of Family and /or staff testimonials describing HS/EHS support's impact during this time.

Participation is not mandatory; however, I sincerely hope that many of you will! I will share your submissions on our social media platforms, as well as with OHS.

Mimi Jefferson, Director
Florida Head Start State Collaboration Office
Mimi.Jefferson@oel.myflorida.com

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Florida Head Start
State Collaboration Office

Bronze Level

Lakeshore[®]

Want to be featured here?

Download FHSA Corporate Partners and Sponsorship Opportunities to learn how you can engage and brand your organization as an industry leader and highlight your commitment to the Head Start community.

Questions? Contact Wanda Minick (850) 694-6477 or email Wanda@FLHeadStart.org.

What's Happening Around the State

Let's travel around the state to see what Head Start/Early Head Start programs have been up to.

[Local Authors Support Children and Families in Need](#)

Sarasota, FL (February 01, 2021) - Local philanthropists and recently published authors Mitchell Epstein and Mike Keebaugh are giving back to the children and families at Children First in unique ways that will not only provide support for comprehensive services but instill a love of literacy and life-long learning.

[Hundreds of low-income children in Miami-Dade County are receiving free books through our "If You Give a Child a Book" Campaign.](#)

WSFLTV-South Florida (January 22, 2021) - Earlier this week, we were at IBK Preschool in Broward County, where students received dozens of free books through our "If You Give a Child a Book" Campaign. On Thursday, we went to a Head Start Center in Miami-Dade, where thousands of books were distributed to children in need.

Studies show the ability to read can help lift children out of poverty. South Dade Child Care Center in Homestead is one of the many schools receiving free books to help low-income students meet their educational goals. Researchers and educators agree that making sure kids have access to books is more important now than ever.

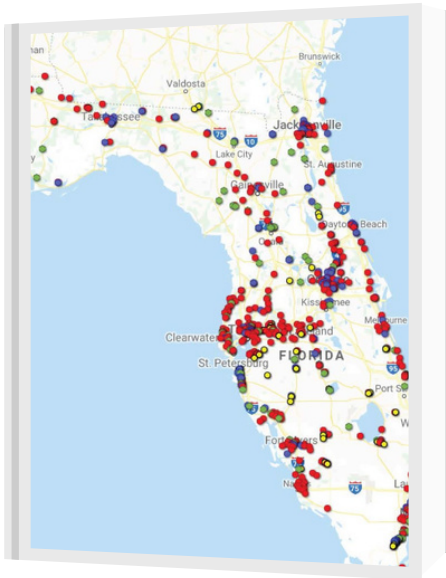
[Kids Incorporated of the Big Bend](#) received

a generous donation of 160+ board books from First Readers of Leon County and The Ounce of Prevention of Florida, which will go to their children and families along with the donation of over 50 art kits from the Kiwanis, Rose, and Jim Ledbetter Way to go, Kids Incorporated for keeping you and focused on Head Start!



[Mid Florida Community Services, Inc. Head Start/Early Head Start](#)

Members of Mid Florida Community services leadership team, COO Mat Kline, Director of Early Learning Programs Heidi Rand, and CEO Michael Georgini met with Bill McLaughlin Jr., President, and CEO of IMCO Inc. and receive a very generous donation of over 50 cases of hand sanitizer and several Quick Stop portable hand sanitizer stations. Thank you, IMCO Inc. and GOJO Industries, for keeping Head Start/Early Head Start children and staff safe.



[Watch how Orange County Head Start students found passion in reading during in 'Read Across the County' initiative held during Florida Literacy Week](#)



[Dad is going to be there no matter what': Orange County program gives fathers support, guidance to be better dads](#)

WFTV9 - Orange County, FL- Hundreds of fathers are now involved in their children's lives and education thanks to Orange County's Head Start program.

A goal set by the program five years ago is now making a huge impact on kids across the area. The goal was to increase father engagement in support of school readiness by this year.

The National Head Start Association is preparing for its Winter Leadership Institute March 9-11, 2021. This event will be held virtually offering informative sessions, invaluable networking events, and the opportunity to make a difference by meeting with members of Congress. To learn more about this event, [click here](#).

On Tuesday, February 9th at 2 pm ET, NHSA will host a Free Webinar to explore strategies to support children's executive function skills. You'll hear how the Head Start community members are partnering with Reflection Sciences to help children develop the skills they need to succeed in school and life. You can [register here](#).

If you have not already, check out NHSA recent blog post celebrating [Black History Month: A Reflection on Head Start History](#) by reexamining how deeply intertwined HeadStart's history is with the Civil Rights Movement.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Calendar of Events](#)

[Employment Opportunities](#)

[Top 3@3](#)



Avenues to Advocacy

Virtual Workshop Series

Please join the third installment of the Avenues to Advocacy virtual workshop series to learn about early learning initiatives for the 2021 legislative session. During this workshop, expert panelists will outline or identify the priorities of organizations leading the charge in this area. Representatives from Florida's Early Learning Consortium will also discuss the need for investments in early education and will highlight the essential role early education teachers play in the lives of children and their families. This workshop session will include an opportunity for attendees to ask questions via chat to our panelists.

[Click here to Register](#)

February 8, 2021 - 1:30 PM to 2:30 PM
Session 3: Early Learning - Building Blocks for Success

Featuring a panel of early learning experts and advocates representing Florida's Early Learning Consortium.

 <p>Association for Early Learning Coalitions</p>	 <p>Children's Forum</p>
 <p>The Children's Movement of Florida</p>	 <p>Florida Association for the Education of Young Children</p>
 <p>Florida Children's Council</p>	 <p>Florida Head Start Association</p>
 <p>United Way of Miami-Dade</p>	 <p>Facilitator</p>

LET'S STAY CONNECTED

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