



## National Head Start Association

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**April 11, 2008**

### **Head Start Community...Call To Action!**

**NHSA needs your help now. “All Head Start Hands On Deck!”** This is required if we are to become stronger... more effective advocates for children and families. **We need you to pay your membership dues if you haven’t already, and register now for our April National Training Conference in Nashville.**

**Change is happening with NHSA;** our staff and board strongly believe these changes are necessary and very positive. **If these changes are going to be effective and enduring, they require your financial support and recommitment to Head Start advocacy.** While we celebrate certain provisions in the recent Reauthorization of Head Start, **we are painfully aware Reauthorization contains other provisions that are potentially devastating for local Head Start programs.**

### **THE CHANGE LINE UP:**

#### NHSA Legislative Agenda

**Our legislative agenda is being primarily developed by a work group headed by Denny DeMers, Chair of NHSA’s Government Affairs Committee. This work group includes among others: Joel Ryan, Ed Condon, Nancy Topping-Talby, Howard Geisbeck and Ted Waters.** Luis Burguillo (Director of NHSA’s Government Affairs) has a weekly conference call with this work group to refine and coordinate our legislative agenda. **We purposely have broadened participation in developing our agenda. We are taking advantage of the multiple sources of talent in the Head Start community. There is agreement, we need to hire a very effective lobbying firm to assist us in achieving our legislative goals now and in the future.**

#### NHSA Management

**NHSA’s administrative team, led by Mike McGrady (Interim Executive Director), and NHSA Board Executive Committee have instituted a weekly conference call to ensure board and staff are working together to accomplish short term objectives and long range goals.** One change made by NHSA Board during its January meeting: the title “NHSA President and CEO” has been changed to “NHSA Executive Director.” The Board also decided to postpone hiring a new Executive Director for six months to a year. It was felt we need to first make needed NHSA internal changes before filling this position. Board members agree we need to hire a search firm to help recruit and hire our Executive Director. **NHSA’s immediate focus areas are: Appropriations, Reauthorization, Nashville Conference, Finances, Member Services and Communication.**

1. Appropriations – **NHSA has had three press events since January 1, stressing the need for increased Head Start funding.** We are pleased with the news coverage and editorials that followed. Our legislative work group is refining our Congressional strategy to obtain adequate funding for Head Start programs. **You will soon be asked to help this effort by organizing local grassroots advocacy focused on sharing information with members of the House and Senate Appropriations Committee.**
2. Reauthorization Regulations – NHSA is making every effort to work with the Head Start Bureau in developing the myriad regulations that will result from Reauthorization. We will keep you informed every step of the way.
3. Finances – **NHSA Board Finance Committee, led by Treasurer Karen Jones, is working closely with NHSA administration to ensure our expenses are less than our operating capital.** Since December we have had to make very painful staff lay offs; six staff have been laid off and there have been four resignations. Many local Head Start programs have also had to go through this excruciating experience. Mike McGrady and his staff assure us they are able to meet our organizational goals and objectives. We are exploring additional funding streams, our goal is to lessen our dependence on conference revenue. **We all are in NHSA staff's debt, we cannot say thank you enough for their dedication and tireless work for Head Start.**
4. Nashville Training Conference – **We need local programs to register for the conference now. NHSA needs the cash flow.** Many of us in Head Start habitually register at the last minute. This makes it difficult for NHSA staff to determine our numbers and it plays hell with our cash flow. **This year's conference will focus on preparing for Reauthorization requirements, we want directors, staff, parents and local board members to attend. Federal and Regional Head Start staff have been invited to share recent information regarding Reauthorization requirements.**
5. Communication – **NHSA Staff and Board are working hard to do a better job of listening and staying in touch with local Head Start programs, State and Regional Associations, Executive Directors and friends of Head Start.** We continue reviewing NHSA materials, web site, and brand image. **We will update and advance the “Look and feel” of NHSA with the Head Start community, coalition partners and government partners.**
6. Member Services - **In the next few weeks you will begin to get additional value for your NHSA membership.** A longtime NHSA supporter recently said, **“Ron I pay my NHSA membership, my agency pays its membership, then we have to pay additionally for everything NHSA offers.”** No argument from me. We will offer members and non-members additional services and information needed in programs...**Free of Charge! Our goal is to continually add value to NHSA membership.**

#### NHSA Governance

**NHSA will complete the work of the Blue Ribbon panel by the end of 2008,** including revision of NHSA By-Laws to include the rights of individual members, clear election processes, and board term limits. Thank you to all Regions that responded to the Blue Ribbon report.

### NHSA's Future

**Now this is really exciting**, Vanessa Rich (Manages City of Chicago Department Responsible for All Chicago Head Start Programs) Barbara Haxton (Executive Director of Ohio Head Start Association) and Gina Ruther (Former Illinois Collaboration Director) are **convening a two day meeting of 40 of the best minds in Head Start to make recommendations about NHSA's future. We should have a preliminary report at our Nashville Conference.** I can not thank these ladies enough for giving so freely of their time and considerable talents.

Sorry this correspondence is so long. I felt it important to share changes occurring at NHSA. **Thank you Executive Directors that attended NHSA's January leadership conference. Your counsel, and recommendations were very valuable, and if you notice, I have freely lifted (stole) from the Action Plan you developed.**

**NHSA needs everyone's financial support, and more effective advocacy. NHSA is fully committed to an aggressive change agenda.** It is a requisite: change is imperative for us to become more effective advocates for children we serve, and for unserved families who desperately need our help.

Listed below are the activities of the National Office since December 1, 2007

### DECEMBER 2007

- Attended the signing of the Head Start Reauthorization Bill with Senator Pelosi Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Senator Kennedy and other members of congress. Help to coordinate local programs in attendance. Also coordinated Head Start student with the signing of the bill.
- Continued work on Special Tracks for the 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Training Conference.
- Designed 1<sup>st</sup> mailer for the 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Training Conference in Nashville.
- Promoted Legal Advisory call on reauthorization, January webinars, and the January Leadership Institute.
- Created ancillary materials and posted "Head Start TV" on the NHSA website.
- Published Linking the Pieces.
- Negotiated the donation of approximately \$10,000 of storage and server hardware.
- On-Going clean up on the HeadsUp! database with client updates.
- Completed Congressional visits with Interim President Michael McGrady.
- NHSA Parent Training Conference presenter - Understanding the Legislative Process/Grassroots Advocacy, Father's Summit, NHSA Legislative Update two sessions (English & Spanish), and Executive Directors meeting.

- Held professional development events at our annual parent training conference:
  - ✓ Held the Enhancing Parent Involvement special track.
  - ✓ Collaborated with Mind-Stream by holding an educational session addressing Head Start and higher education.
  - ✓ Made a presentation on Head Start funding during the Director's Summit/Executive Challenges training.
  - ✓ Presented research for parents and practitioners in two educational sessions.
  
- Planned events to provide high quality professional development training at our annual training conference, including the Research Forums, Research Luncheon, Grassroots Research Breakfast, and our educational sessions.
  - ✓ Held a focus group at our parent conference to determine the professional development needs of the Head Start community.
  - ✓ Distributed and collected evaluation forms to evaluate the parent training conference, the needs of parent conference exhibitors, and the director's institute.
  
- Supported NHSA's advocacy efforts by ...
  1. Estimating the impacts of various funding formulas and Fiscal Year (FY) 2008 appropriations bills on Head Start programs.
  2. Compiling Program Information Report (PIR) data for use in advocacy materials.
  3. Making a presentation on Head Start program quality, research, and assessments at the New England Head Start Association Directors Meeting and Parent Leadership Conference.
  
- Completed the execution of the 2007 Annual Parenting Training Conference
  
- Finalized contract for 2008 September and 2009 January Leadership Conference & Board of Director's Meeting
  
- Continued preparation for the 2008 Annual Conference.
  
- Continued search for the 2010 & 2011 Annual Conference.
  
- Prepared for the 2008 January Leadership Conference & Board of Director's

## **JANUARY 2008**

- The Interim Executive Director met with several Head Start Programs in Southwestern Virginia head Start Directors. Gave update on NHSA's activities and Reauthorization.
  
- The NBC Today Show and NHSA worked in collaboration on a donation to Head Start of more than 250,000 DVDs, bears and the accompanying books.

- Completed first phase of the Head Start Development Fund, LLC. The Advisory and Governing Boards were established.
- Redistributed work responsibilities due to a reduction in staff.
- Completed 1<sup>st</sup> mailer for the 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Training Conference in Nashville.
- Facilitated Board meetings during the January Leadership Institute
- Incorporated 2007 PIR data into the NHSA database.
- Completed a major overhaul of network resources made possible by the donation of \$10,000 of storage and server hardware by Global Impact.
- Completed a new disk-to-disk-to-tape backup system for NHSA documents.
- Participated in NHSA PR/Legislative and communications strategy meetings.
- Coordinated with the Technology Department on updating the Head Start program match list with House and Senate appropriations members.
- Participated Fiscal Year 2008 Supplemental Appropriations strategy meetings with the Hastings Group and NHSA, the Government Affairs and Research and Evaluation Departments.
- Participated in the development of the DRAFT supplemental appropriations letter for House and Senate appropriations subcommittee Chair Obey and Ranking Member Walsh and members, asking for \$471 million in FY 2008.
- Facilitated the January Leadership Institute in Crystal City, Virginia
- Presented and participated in the District of Columbia Mayor's Advisory on the Pre-K Bill.
- Collaborated with a number of national organizations and individuals on projects to enhance NHSA's advocacy and professional development efforts:
  - Held a planning meeting with the Casey Family Programs regarding the Child Welfare Series and other possible future collaborations.
  - Helped the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities draft a report on Head Start Reauthorization and the decline in Head Start funding.
  - Met with the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth to plan future projects.
  - Secured a statement from Dr. Edward Zigler on Head Start Reauthorization and funding.
- Contributed to the development of NHSA's high quality professional development offerings by...

- Planning events at our annual training conference, including the Child Welfare Focus Series, a Research Forum on Parent and Family Outcomes, Research Luncheon, Grassroots Research Breakfast, and our educational sessions.
- Reviewing the proposals submitted through our annual training conference's Call for Papers.
- Developing a systematic approach to producing annual conference materials, including the content of the annual training conference marketing postcard.
- Disseminating the Call for Papers for the research-based focus forums to be held at our annual training conference
- Helping to develop content for the January 2008 Leadership Institute and secured speakers for that institute.
- Processing Continuing Education Units for Academy Basics.
- Held conference calls and performed various tasks to implement the evaluation of the NHSA/Nike Let Me Play Project and reviewed the preliminary evaluation report of the Let Me Play Project.
- Supported NHSA's advocacy efforts by ...
  - Participating in NHSA's January 24, 2008 Billion Broken Promises' media event by answering questions about Head Start funding and Head Start's effectiveness.
  - Calculating NHSA's "Ask" with respect to the Fiscal Year (FY) 2008 supplemental appropriations bill and the appropriations legislation for FYs 2009-2013.
  - Distributing the first Research Nuggets Update.
  - Emailing to the Head Start community Oregon Businessman Richard Alexander's offer to help state Head Start associations build coalitions with high-level businesspeople in their states.
  - Estimating the impacts of various funding formulas and FY 2008 appropriations bills on Head Start programs.
- Worked on survey and evaluation projects to ensure that NHSA is providing high quality training and services:
  - Began drafting a budget cut survey.
  - Distributed and collected evaluation forms to evaluate the January 2008 Leadership Institute.

- Performed data entry of parent training conference evaluation data, set up the needed databases, and started the data analysis for the parent training conference evaluation report.
- Reviewed proposals for classes and training for the 35th Annual Training Conference.
- Completed two Webinars on Oral Health with Delta Dental and Implementing a System for Budget Development with James L. Pasley Jr., CEO, Pasley and Associates.
- Read and evaluated Challenge Grant proposals
- Created and completed 'Let Me Play' highlight reel Scheduled and coordinated all logistics for remaining trainings. Including equipment, food reimbursement and data entry
- Prepared for and conducted Quality Initiative Review 2008, including oversight of entire QI Review process and coordinated site visits with QI applicants and reviewers.
- Managed the Basic Family Services and Basic Health Services credentials, including providing oversight to portfolio reviews and report writing.

## **FEBRUARY 2008**

- Met with the Executive committee of Region IV regarding continued participation in NHTSA activities and membership.
- Attended the press event at the Edwin Mazique Child Care Center with American Academy of Pediatrics Dentistry announcing a new initiative to provide support and assistance in dental care. This will help Head Start Families have a dental home. This new initiative is possible through a contract from the Office of Head Start. Johnson & Johnson Healthcare Institute, Sesame Street and UCLA also participated in the press event.
- Facilitated weekly management calls between NHTSA Executive committee and NHTSA staff management team.
- Developed plan to increase membership with contractor, Greg Powell.
- Participated in Migrant and Seasonal workers Head Start Board Meeting and Conference.
- Completed final mailer for the 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Training Conference in Nashville.
- Ordered new copiers for NHTSA office saving over \$12,000 in the projected budget.
- Coordinated a plan to develop a second hand smoke initiative in Head Start Programs. This is also in conjunction with the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Met with Congressional staffers regarding Head Start reauthorization.

- Developed and initiated distribution of the NHSA FY 2008 supplemental appropriations request letter to House and Senate appropriations committees
- Participated with coalition partners on a series of meeting and briefings with key House and Senate members of the appropriations committees and leadership (Senators Reid, Durbin, Inouye, Dodd, Kennedy, Lautenberg, and Speaker Pelosi, Majority Whip Clyburn, Rep. Serrano, Bacerra, Bobby Scott, etc.)
- Assisted Rep. Sanchez office in developing dear colleague letter to the Budget committee requesting \$800 million for Head Start
- Met with House appropriations committee chief of staff at their request, on FY 2009 Head Start appropriations – responded to a series of questions the committee asked NHSA to address – R&E responded in total.
- Initiated discussions with the Tri Caucuses (CBC, CHC, CAPAC) as well as the Caucus for Woman’s Issues to conduct a Head Start briefing.
- Collaborated with a number of national organizations and individuals on projects to enhance NHSA’s advocacy and professional development efforts:
  - Attended a Children’s Leadership Council meeting to discuss the development of a new national children’s coalition.
  - Held a planning meeting with the Casey Family Programs regarding the Child Welfare Series and other possible future collaborations.
  - Met with the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth to plan future projects.
  - Participated in a conference call with the National Program Manager of the Oregon Environmental Council’s (OEC) Eco-Healthy Childcare Initiative and was invited to serve on the OEC’s national advisory committee.
- Contributed to the development of NHSA’s high quality professional development offerings by...
  - Planning events at our annual training conference, including the Child Welfare Focus Series, a Research Forum on Parent and Family Outcomes, Research Luncheon, Grassroots Research Breakfast, and our educational sessions.

- Developing a systematic approach to producing annual conference materials, including the content of the annual training conference marketing postcard.
- Disseminating the Call for Papers for the research-based focus forums to be held at our annual training conference.
- Processing Continuing Education Units for Academy Basics.
- Held conference calls and performed various tasks to implement the evaluation of the NHSA/Nike Let Me Play Project and reviewed the preliminary evaluation report of the Let Me Play Project.
- Supported NHSA's advocacy efforts by ...
  1. Supplying budget and enrollment data for NHSA's February 4, 2008 media event highlighting the inadequacy of President Bush's FY 2009 budget proposal for Head Start.
  2. Estimating impacts of various funding formulas and FY 2008 appropriations bills on Head Start programs.
  3. Participating in the West Coast Economic Forum on Early Childhood Investment.
- Worked on survey and evaluation projects to ensure that NHSA is providing high quality training and services:
  1. Began to develop questions for our marketing survey.
  2. Fielded a budget cut survey.
  - ✓ Performed data entry of parent training conference evaluation data, set up the needed databases, and started the data analysis for the parent training conference evaluation report.
    - ✓ Performed site visits to locate a facility for the 2008 Director's Training Conference
    - ✓ Continued preparation for the 2008 Annual Conference.
    - ✓ Confirmed presenters for the 2008 Annual Conference
    - ✓ Solicited for exhibitors and sponsorship opportunity for 2008 Annual Conference.
- Continue coordinating logistics and content for Quality Initiative site visits with reviewers and Head Start programs.

- Planning Transition Special Track 2008 to be held at Annual Conference with Early Head Start National Resource Center and Head Start National Resource Center.
- Traveled to Alabama to review training for 'Let Me Play'
- Scouted program location in California for possible hosting of DVD filming for 'Let Me Play'.
- Completed Webinar regarding Budget Closeouts for 2008 with Mr. James Pasley.

Again, make sure you have paid your NHSA membership dues, and register for Nashville. **“All Head Start Hands On Deck... We Have Promises To Keep!”**

Sincerely,



Michael McGrady  
Interim Executive Director



Ron Herndon  
Chair, Board of Directors