

Legislative restructuring of Head Start

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Good Afternoon,

I want to bring your attention to the below information released today by the Education and the Workforce Committee.

Chairman Kline would like to share with you a white paper outlining the principles and goals to reauthorize the Head Start Act. As the committee moves forward with an effort to strengthen the program, Chairman Kline is interested in receiving your feedback on ways to turn the policy goals in the white paper into a responsible legislative solution.

Please reach out to me with any questions, and be in touch with the committee with your comments. We always appreciate hearing from you.

Thank you,

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Committee Requests Public Feedback to Reform Head Start Program

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The House Education and the Workforce Committee today released a [white paper](#) outlining goals to reform the *Head Start Act* and requesting public feedback on ways to strengthen the law. The paper is the latest effort by the committee to improve federal early learning and child care programs.

“Our country has long invested in early learning and child care programs,” **said Education and the Workforce Committee Chairman John Kline (R-MN)**. “Congress has a responsibility to ensure this investment is meeting the needs of the vulnerable families we aim to serve, while balancing the interests of taxpayers. That is precisely what Congress did when it reauthorized with bipartisan support the Child Care and Development Block Grant program. It is my hope we can build on this progress by reforming the Head Start program, and the feedback from concerned citizens and stakeholders will help us move forward in that important effort.”

The white paper released today discusses a number of goals for strengthening the Head Start program, including reducing unnecessary regulatory burdens, strengthening coordination between Head Start and programs at the state

and local levels, and improving the quality of eligible providers. The public and stakeholders should provide feedback by June 1.

To read the white paper, click [here](#).

To submit comments to the committee, email headstart.reform@mail.house.gov.

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Strengthening the Federal Investment in Early Childhood Education and the Workforce Committee U.S. House of Representatives January 21, 2015 Background The federal investment in early childhood services began in the 1930s as part of the Works Progress Administration's response to unemployment. An initial investment in child care centers evolved under the Lanham Act of 1940 into a work support program for mothers participating in the war effort. What started as an effort to serve young children impacted by the war, has grown into a multi-billion dollar commitment funding dozens of programs across the federal government. In 2012, the nonpartisan Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a report which identified 45 early learning and child care programs spread across multiple federal agencies with a total annual cost exceeding \$13 billion. According to the report (emphasis added): The federal investment in early learning and child care is fragmented in that it is administered through 45 programs that provide or may support related services to children from birth through age 5, as well as five tax provisions that subsidize private expenditures in this area. The programs are concentrated within the Departments of Education (Education) and Health and Human Services (HHS)—the principal administrators of the federal government's early learning and child care programs—but are also administered by the Departments of Agriculture, the Interior, Justice, Labor, Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the General Services Administration (GSA), and the Appalachian Regional Commission. Some of these programs overlap in that they have similar goals for children under the age of 5 and are targeted to similar groups of children. For example, five programs, administered by Education and HHS, provide school readiness services to low-income children, and programs in both Education and the Interior provide funding for early learning services for Indian children. Among the 45 programs, 12 have an explicit program purpose of providing early learning or child care services. 1 While not all of the 45 programs have an explicit purpose of delivering early learning or child care services, the GAO noted that many permit the use of funds for this purpose or provide supportive services to facilitate such care. Some programs are also multipurpose block grants for which early learning or child care is not the primary purpose but are nevertheless known to provide significant funding for child care. The findings of the GAO report assert that this fragmentation and program overlap can raise administrative costs and prevent both children and families from being served efficiently and effectively. The report also noted previous attempts to foster cooperation and efficiency did not sufficiently provide comprehensive oversight across all the relevant agencies to improve services. Head Start One of the most significant early childhood education and development programs is Head Start. Created in 1965 during the Johnson administration, Head Start provides comprehensive services to low-income three- and four-year-old children to help prepare them to enter kindergarten by improving the conditions necessary for success in school and life. The 1994 reauthorization of the Head Start Act created an Early Head Start program in order to expand services to

children from birth to age three. The authorization for the Head Start program expired in September 2012. At the federal level, Head Start is administered by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), which awards funds directly to local grantees. Programs are locally designed and administered by a network of roughly 1,600 public and private nonprofit and for-profit agencies. Head Start agencies are required to comply with detailed federal performance standards. In fiscal year 2014, Head Start was appropriated \$8.6 billion, and the program currently serves approximately one million children. Head Start Impact Studies The 2007 reauthorization of the Head Start Act required the department to issue a number of scientific studies designed to measure the long-term impact of Head Start. On January 15, 2010, HHS released the Head Start Impact Study, which determined gains from participating in the program do not last through the end of the first grade.² In December 2012, HHS released the results of a Head Start Third Grade Follow-Up Study, which evaluated the same cohort of children through the end of third grade.³ The department's study concluded: By the end of 3rd grade there were very few impacts ... in any of the four domains of cognitive, social-emotional, health, and parenting practices. The few impacts that were found did not show a clear pattern of favorable or unfavorable impacts for children. Universal Pre-K Proposal In his 2013 State of the Union address, President Obama introduced a "Preschool for All" proposal that would significantly expand the federal government's role in early learning services. The proposal includes \$75 billion in new mandatory spending (over 10 years) for a universal program that would provide funds to states to support preschool access for four-year-olds from low- and moderate-income families. This proposed program would encourage states to expand preschool services to families of all incomes. The president's proposal would also direct the Secretary of HHS to convert Head Start slots for four-year-olds into Early Head Start slots for children ages three and under, which would virtually eliminate the Head Start program as it has existed for more than 50 years.

1 U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO); Opportunities to Reduce Duplication, Overlap and Fragmentation, Achieve Savings, and Enhance Revenue: Washington, DC; February 2012. p. 193-194, GAO-12-342SP

2 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS); Head Start Impact Study Final Report: Washington, DC; January 2010. For more information, see: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/executive_summary_final.pdf.

3 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS); Third Grade Follow-up to the Head Start Impact Study Final Report: Washington, DC; October 2012. For more information, see: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/head_start_report.pdf.

Federal Government Moving Forward

Please do not even read this without accepting this true statement. Let us stop and debate the next paragraph if you do not agree.

"The public good is a summary of the individual private good. One hopes 2 plus 2 equal 4, but..... the public bad also plays in the total. **The public good does not exist without the individual private good as**

its source. When individual children cannot succeed in the local communities it means there is not enough individual private good being created, shared or sustained at the delivery points required. The last 100 years have proven those delivery points must start at age 0-6 and absolutely not later.”

Quality early childhood education plays an important role in the health and success of the nation’s most vulnerable children and families. Early childhood development and education (age 0-6) is about local growth education, economics, emotions and ethics. There is a reduction in regulation when these local growth considerations are merged with a focus on the local family’s growth. AND, the local school district assumes its role as the vested public entity positioning local families (mom, dad, others and children age 0-6) to grow.

URGENCY AND CONSTRAINT EXITS WHEN AGE 0-6 IS USED IN THE REDEFINITION.

The redefinition allows everyone in the nation to focus on the end in mind spear point. That is 100% of all at risk children will be really ready to read, count and understand positive expectations before kindergarten defined within the first 6 years.

Local effectiveness will come right out of the book (to be locally customized) from end in mind, proactive, first things first thinking. First things first thinking will be guided by Socratic what to change, what to change too, and how to cause the change local prioritization change processes.

THIS IS ALREADY BEING DONE IN HALF OF OUR LOCAL NATION, SO IT IS NOT IMPOSSIBLE TO COMPREHEND ON A LOCAL LEVEL OR ITS EXPANSION TO THE WHOLE.

The monies to do this are already in the systems and structures of the public sector but are hidden from sight because those structures are not designed to highlight and leverage first things first constraint possibilities.

Research has shown early education can help children be better prepared to succeed in their academic, economic, emotional and ethical careers and even help them develop key interpersonal skills that will serve them well later in life. Recognizing the very real fiscal, educational, emotional and ethical challenges facing the country, policymakers have a responsibility to examine and reform existing early care and education programs before creating new programs and promises.

That is precisely the path Congress pursued in 2014 when it reformed the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act for the first time in nearly two decades. Leaders in the House and Senate reached a bipartisan agreement that included important reforms to enhance parental choice, strengthen child safety, and promote high-quality care. President Obama signed this bipartisan, bicameral agreement into law on November 19, thereby improving this vital lifeline for millions of working families.

Congress should build on this progress by (delivering programs to local ownership) strengthening the Head Start program. Toward that end, the committee intends to pursue reforms to the Head Start program that would help achieve the following goals:

1. Reduce unnecessary regulatory burdens; (Federal regulation would go away with the Block Grant that creates outcomes from local school districts for age 0-6 readiness)
2. Encourage local innovation by demanding ownership of the family and child outcomes; Yes, yes and yes.
3. Strengthen coordination between Head Start and programs at the state and local levels; (There is a huge benefit to alignment from the school district to the state based on the requirement that local school districts become totally vested in age 0-6 readiness. The complexity of state laws are also in the way of this grassroots rebuilding of the parent's responsibility for age 0-6 readiness outcomes)
4. and 5. Improve the quality of eligible providers; and enhance parental engagement to support their children's best interests. (This can best be done from the local effort to make certain that best practice be defined by the individual natural development of the child and local resources be made available to parents in coordination with the local school districts to make certain that 100% of all at risk children will be really ready to read, count and understand positive expectations before kindergarten)
6. Define who is vested and responsible for local growth education, economics, emotions and ethics. There is a reduction in regulation when these local growth considerations are merged with a focus on the local family's growth. Nobody would say the Federal Government is the best agent for this. AND, how will the local school district assume its role as the vested public entity positioning local families (mom, dad, others and children age 0-6) to grow. Left to doing what is first for the child they have proven unreliable.

As congress moves forward with an effort to reform the Head Start program, the Committee is interested to receive public feedback on ways to turn these policy goals into a responsible legislative solution. Answers to the following questions by interested stakeholders will help inform the Committee's work.

Questions for Stakeholder Consideration

1. What role should the federal government play to promote the quality of learning within the Head Start program? See #4 below.
2. What steps can agencies take to enhance coordination of existing early learning programs across the federal government? See #4 below.
3. What innovative steps are states taking to improve the quality of early education for their unique populations? Everything along the lines of #4 below is appropriate as the source of first things first change.
4. How can the federal government best support states' efforts to maximize parental involvement in early childhood education? How can Congress ensure parents remain the ultimate decision-maker in the life of their child? Local school districts should be encouraged to adopt as an "above the law charter" the provisions of a.) Minnesota Statute 120B.11 and b.) The Absorbent Mind by Maria Montessori.

How can Local districts vest in the outcomes of best practice and not be given wiggle room to fail in the creation of continuous improvement using something similar to 4a. and 4b. above as guiding content.

How can local districts commission local thinking as to doing first things first. Again in an “above the law charter” it must adopt something similar to the Theory of Constraints to guide continuous improvement change management.

How can local effectiveness come right out of the book (to be locally customized) from end in mind, proactive, first things first thinking? How can first things first thinking be guided by Socratic what to change, what to change too, and how to cause the change local prioritization?

How much help does the private sector need to make the following point to mother, father and child. “The public good is a summary of the individual private good. One hopes $2 + 2 = 4$, but..... the public bad also plays in the total. **The public good does not exist without the individual private good as its source.** When individual children cannot succeed in the local communities it means there is not enough individual private good being created, shared and sustained at the delivery points required. The last 100 years have proven those delivery points must start at age 0-6 and absolutely not later.” Everything would be different if 100% of the children started kindergarten ready to read, count and understand positive expectations as defined by absolute best practice.

5. What kind of information could the federal government provide to help parents understand the vesting required within the options available for their children’s early care and education?

How can the federal government republish the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence -- with a what does this mean addendum and roll into the fact that English Literacy is Freedom here at home and internationally.

How can the federal government create block grants that require local vesting and get out of the business of early child development and education over a period of 10-15 years that also spearheads economic growth.