

Preschool Development Grants and Head Start/Early Head Start: 6 Win-Win's for Vulnerable Children



Head Start (HS) and Early Head Start (EHS) play a critical role in state early childhood systems. Leading states - and past Preschool Development Grant (PDG) efforts – have demonstrated how **states can both leverage and support HS and EHS** to serve more vulnerable children prenatal-to-age five.

In particular, **HS and EHS are facing a workforce crisis that has led to shuttered classrooms**. This challenge needs both expanded federal and state/local support. A recent survey by NHSA found:

- Enrollment sits at 73% for HS & 77% for EHS
- 17% of classrooms were closed Labor Day week
- 18% of staff positions are currently vacant with 80% of respondents citing low compensation as the main driver

6 Win-Win Opportunities in PDG to Leverage & Support HS/EHS

1. Raise HS/EHS **workforce compensation** to reopen closed classrooms
2. Expand **use of child care funding by HS/EHS programs** to meet family needs
3. Maximize **enrollment** of food insecure children through new **SNAP eligibility**
4. Provide **direct funding to HS in pre-K** to expand comprehensive services
5. Expand access to the **Early Head Start model** to reach more infants/toddlers
6. **Engage HS/EHS families and Policy Councils** to improve state policymaking

The Head Start/Early Head Start Model

What:

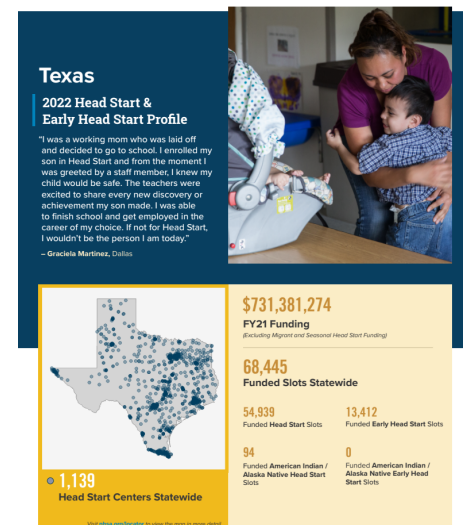
- Comprehensive services for children/families (education/health/family support)
- Prenatal-to-five
- Proven to work

Who:

- Richly diverse families and staff
- Inclusive: poverty; foster; homeless; SNAP, disability; dual language learners
- High immigrant/new American population

How:

- Stable fed. investment w/no state match
- Accountable
- Tuition-free



Benefits and Suggested Key Metrics for Win-Win's

Win-Win	Benefits	Key Metric(s)
1. Raise HS/EHS workforce compensation to reopen closed classrooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain qualified/experienced HS/EHS staff in the ECE workforce Reduce cross-sector competition for staff that negatively impacts the most vulnerable families Open closed classrooms to serve thousands more children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avg. HS/EHS teacher comp. in targeted programs # of reopened classrooms
2. Expand use of child care funding by HS/EHS programs to meet family needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve program hours for working HS/EHS families Cover true cost of HS/EHS services and expand workforce comp. Strengthen HS/EHS child care partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of HS/EHS children dually enrolled # of HS/EHS slots with extended hours # of EHS-CCP partnerships
3. Maximize enrollment in HS/EHS through new SNAP eligibility pathway to serve more food insecure children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food insecure families access HS/EHS meals, health services Reduce unmet need in child care subsidy Fill HS/EHS classrooms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # HS/EHS families newly enrolled through SNAP pathway # of allied health/nutrition services provided to newly enrolled children
4. Provide direct funding to HS in state pre-K to expand comprehensive services in pre-K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand access to comprehensive services in state pre-K for the most vulnerable children Strengthen services to DLL's and children with disabilities Reduce HS/school district friction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of directly funding slots in HS classrooms # of additional DLL and children with disabilities served by HS
5. Expand access to the Early Head Start model to reach more infant and toddlers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children reached earlier, when brain development most rapid and parents most stressed More infants/toddlers access EHS proven model Child care infant/toddler quality strengthened 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of children newly enrolled in classrooms using EHS model # of children served in EHS home visiting (if applicable)
6. Engage HS/EHS families and Policy Councils in state policymaking to raise voices of those with lived experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More parent leaders/leadership More diverse voices in state policy Better state policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of parent/family leaders from HS/EHS trained/engaged # of policies informed by parent/family voice

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