

# Our Commitment to Children and Families Will Not Change.

Federal requirements may change. Our commitment to children and families will not change.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has proposed changes to Head Start Program Performance Standards. The Centers has conducted a risk analysis to understand how these proposed changes could impact our children, families, workforce, and community.

## FOUR HIGH-RISK AREAS

- 1. Comprehensive Services for Children & Families** Proposed changes to reduce federal requirements for comprehensive family services directly impact required newborn and family visits, case tracking, and essential healthcare services—including physical, oral, and mental health, as well as family support—for enrolled pregnant women and families. ***These services are critical for healthy moms, healthy babies, strong families, and thriving children.***
- 2. A Highly Qualified Workforce** Proposed changes for certain key staff positions may reduce federally prescribed qualifications and professional development requirements. ***Flexibility should not mean lowering our expectations for professional excellence.***
- 3. Quality, Accountability & Oversight** Proposed changes may impact quality assurance, program accountability, monitoring, and federal oversight. Local flexibility can be valuable in administrative matters. Strong standards and accountability remain essential to children's health and safety, educational quality, and responsible stewardship of Head Start resources.
- 4. Administrative Capacity** Proposed changes would reduce the administrative cost cap from 15% to 5% of total approved program costs. The Centers opposes this reduction. Financial management, staffing support, and oversight help keep services safe, accountable, and reliable. ***Retain the 15% cap to sustain essential program operations.***

## WHAT WE BELIEVE MUST BE PROTECTED

Quality curriculum, appropriate teacher-child ratios and group sizes; early screenings and intervention; health, oral health, and mental health; consistent home-based services; and strong family support. Children's languages, cultures, family, and communities must remain central. Children should be supported, not excluded.

## OUR PARENTS ARE SPEAKING

*"The need for dual-language learning remains higher than ever."*

*"It is imperative that qualified individuals be hired to work with children. Many skills are acquired through education."*

*"Mental health is part of holistic wellness. Everyone needs access to mental health and deserves an opportunity to learn about mental health."*

*"Some of these changes would be detrimental to the overall development of my child. Please reconsider these changes."*

*"Whatever is done should not outweigh priority of funding that will affect families and the administration at the expense of our children's future."*

**Their voices matter—and we are listening.**

## THE CENTERS DIFFERENCE & OUR PROMISE

Our educators work alongside early childhood mental health professionals. Families can connect to pediatrics, pediatric behavioral health, dental care, behavioral health medicine, substance use services, and community resources. We support the whole child and the whole family.

**Federal regulations establish a minimum standard.**

**They do not have to become our maximum standard.**

**We will listen to our parents, support our staff, protect quality, and advocate for our families. We will continue putting children first.**