

Media Statement

The Elimination of Head Start Rumored to be Proposed by President Trump Would Be Catastrophic for Working Families, Young Children, and Head Start Employees

Statement from Region VII Head Start Association Executive Director, Donna Veatch

Lees Summit, MO (April 14, 2025) – On Friday, April 11, [USA Today reported that President Trump’s upcoming budget will propose the full-scale elimination of the nearly 60 year-old, highly effective Head Start program](#). **This unprecedented move would dismantle one of the nation’s most effective investments in children, families, and communities**—and leave more than 35,600 children without access to essential early education and family support and would put more than 10,000 Head Start staff out of work across Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska.

This action will hurt the region’s children, parents, businesses, and ultimately, taxpayers. **“Eliminating Head Start wouldn’t just hurt children—it would upend the lives of working families across the nation and devastate local economies,”** Donna Veatch, Director of Executive Services for Region VII Head Start Association shared. **“This is more than early learning. It’s about access to healthcare, family stability, and long-term success. Beyond the classroom, every Head Start dollar reinvests directly into the community through wages, local services, and supplies.”**

Head Start provides the highest quality early education and comprehensive child and family supports to children birth through age 5, their families, and pregnant women. Head Start provides free child care, connection to needed medical, dental, and mental health care, support around family goals, free healthy meals and nutrition resources, referrals to housing resources and much more for some of the most vulnerable families in our communities. **Head Start is often the only means for these services, especially in rural areas.**

Across the four state region there are Head Start centers in over 2,250 different locations. These centers employ teachers, cooks, bus drivers, family service workers, and more. Most Head Start families include at least one working parent or a parent in job training or school. If President Trump’s budget proposal is realized, between Head Start staff and parents, **over 33,677 individuals will be out of work either due to the loss of child care or the elimination of their employer**. A shutdown of Head Start would not only halt the learning and care for thousands of vulnerable children, but would raise unemployment and hurt the regional economy.

Since its founding in 1965, Head Start has helped nearly 40 million families, offering a path to independence and opportunity through a proven, multigenerational approach. Research has shown the program yields long-term returns of \$7–\$10 for every federal dollar invested.

Nationwide, nearly 800,000 children and more than 1 million working parents would be impacted if the program was eliminated.

Without legislative action, the proposal, as reported by USA Today, remains simply a proposal. For the sake of our children, families, staff, and our economy, we must not let this proposal become a reality. The Region VII Head Start Association calls on Congress—**Republicans and Democrats alike**—to reject this harmful proposal and **fully fund Head Start** in the final 2026 federal budget.