



Vermont Head Start Association



February 21, 2022

Re: Governor’s Proposed Budget for FY23

Dear Chair Mary Hooper, Chair Ann Pugh, and Members of House Appropriations and House Human Services:

On behalf of Vermont’s Head Start programs and agencies, and the children and families we serve, we want to thank you for the support of last year’s child care bill H171/Act 45.

To ensure success of Act 45—achieving an affordable, accessible, equitable, high-quality early childhood education system—and to recover successfully from the pandemic as we withstand workforce shortages and families continuing to struggle to afford child care, we hope you will consider the following:

- I. Support of the Governor’s CCFAP proposed increases
- II. And recruiting and retaining strategies that support our child care workforce:
 - Providing no-cost child care for early childhood educators
 - Helping early childhood educators access and afford health insurance
 - Helping reduce student loan debt and repayment
 - Focusing on recruiting new early childhood educators to the field, like retention bonuses.

Early care and education providers are essential, and this has never been more evident.

Thank you,

Betsy Rathbun-Gunn
Christy Swenson
Vermont Head Start Association

About Head Start

Head Start programs are two-generation, child and family development programs for children and families with low income. Head Start and Early Head Start provide high quality, comprehensive, early care and education services for children ages birth to five, and social services for their families. Our high quality, research-based programs with rigorous accountability help to facilitate positive outcomes for children and families.

CVOEO / Champlain Valley Head Start 431 Pine Street Burlington, VT 05401	Capstone Head Start 20 Gable Place Barre, VT 05641	NEKCA / Child & Family Development Program 191 High Street Barton, VT 05822	Early Education Services / Windham County 130 Birge Street Brattleboro, VT 05301
Bennington County Head Start P.O. Box 588 Bennington, VT 05201	Rutland County Head Start Box 222 Rutland, VT 05701	SEVCA / Windsor County Head Start 15 Pine Street Springfield, VT 05156	State Head Start Collaboration Office 103 South Main Street Waterbury, VT 05671