



## Public Policy Update Reauthorization of the Head Start Act

### **Background**

---

The leadership in the House of Representatives and Senate made the reauthorization of Head Start a top priority of the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress. While the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress came close to reauthorizing the bill, controversial provisions were inserted that caused the reauthorization process to stall and ultimately fail to produce passable legislation. In December, 2007 Congress passed, and the president signed, legislation to reauthorize Head Start titled *Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act*.

### **Legislative Update**

---

CEC is pleased that the *Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act* addressed many issues of concern including:

- Ensures that children with disabilities are promptly identified and served
- Terminates the National Reporting System
- Strengthens and expands Early Head Start
- Expanding access to Head Start programs for Migrant and Seasonal Head Start and the Native American Head State program
- Expands access to allow families with incomes between 100 percent and 130 percent of the poverty level to participate in the Head Start program
- Requires all Head Start teachers to have an Associate's degree by 2011 and half of all teachers nationally to have at least a Bachelor's degree in early childhood education or a Bachelor's degree with coursework equivalent to a major relating to early childhood education and experience teaching preschool-age children by 2013
- Stresses the importance of parental involvement
- Strengthens the governing oversight body responsible for Head Start programs

### **CEC Contact Information**

---

For more information, please contact Deborah A. Ziegler, Associate Executive Director for Policy and Advocacy Services at [debz@cec.sped.org](mailto:debz@cec.sped.org), 1-800-224-6830 ext. 406.