

**HEAD START'S FUTURE:
Perspectives from the Bush Administration,
Congress, States, Advocates and Researchers**



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PANEL TWO: The Role of States and Communities

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PANEL TWO: The Role of States and Communities



MS. ANDREA KANE: I'm Andrea Kane with Brookings, and we've heard a lot about what states might do or might not do. We've heard a lot about what local Head Start programs do do. Now we're going to turn to some folks that can talk directly from that point of view.

We have with us Ron Herndon, immediately to my right, who runs a Head Start program in Portland, Oregon and is also head of the Head Start Association.

We have to his right Henry Johnson who is the Superintendent of Schools from Mississippi, and has also worked in a number of other states. I think he can offer several state perspectives.

We have to his right Ed Zigler who I think probably needs no introduction to most of you as someone who's often referred to as the Father of the Head Start Program. He can talk to us about what he thinks about this proposal.

To my left is Helen Blank who is a consultant on child care strategies, and recently served for years as the Director of Child Care Programs at the Children's Defense Fund.

What we are going to do is each person's going to take about ten minutes. We will strictly enforce that time limit and Molly will hold up signs for people because we want to make sure that you all have a chance to ask questions and interact with this wonderful panel that we have.

So without any further ado we're going to start with Ed Zigler.



MR. EDWARD ZIGLER: Thank you.

Let me start by saying that I fully endorse the Bush Administration's taking a fresh look at Head Start, to think through ways the program could be improved. In my very first Head Start book in fact I wrote a chapter called "Head Start, not a program but an evolving concept". The fact is over the years with the national laboratory approach to Head Start that I initiated back in the '70s, there's probably a lot of experiments in Head Start. The most recent being Early Head Start.

But the experiment that's being advanced by the Bush Administration

that we heard about already is to allow states to administer the Head Start program. States that want to do so must prepare an acceptable proposal that guarantees that all the teachers that have characterized the Head Start program over its entire 38 year existence will be maintained.

The rationale for this drastic change in Head Start from a community-run to a state-run program is to achieve the worthwhile goal of better coordination between Head Start and state-run pre-school programs as well as other federal programs now managed by the states.

Unlike all the earlier non-risk experiments, the Bush Administration proposal poses for me an unacceptable risk for Head Start's 900,000 extremely vulnerable pre-schoolers. Further, I think the Administration's worthy goal of better coordination can be achieved by less draconian means. Everybody here is in favor of better coordination in Head Start.

The President's proposal is contained in a document entitled, "Strengthening Head Start". How strong Head Start is depends upon but a single factor -- how good is the quality built into the Head Start program model and how well is the program implemented at the local level?

We must therefore concentrate on exactly what experiences children and their parents have as a result of being enrolled in the Head Start program.

The evidence is overwhelming. The magnitude of positive outcomes is directly related to the quality of the program.

Since my major concern is the quality of the program, it is irrelevant to me whether the ultimate steward of the program is the federal or the state government. Why then do I prefer the longstanding federal to local funding stream over a state to local funding stream? Because all the evidence we have the currently federally-run Head Start program is superior in quality to the states' pre-school programs. Especially in regard to the two keynotes of Head Start, parent involvement and comprehensive services.

Wade Horn is correct. The one place where states do better than the Head Start program is that they have higher quality teachers. They're not likely to be BA's, but the answer then isn't to hand Head Start to the states, but rather to say Head Start must have BA level teachers which we could do any time we put up the money to do it. What then are the quality features of Head Start that the states are not close to matching?

Parent involvement. Head Start quality councils which I created way back in the '70s is at least one-half parents.

Comprehensive services is the other hallmark of Head Start. We have early education, physical and mental health, nutrition, social services to the child and to the families. These

services delivered in a high quality way are guaranteed by the Head Start performance standards which have evolved and been improved over the 38 year life of Head Start.

A highly visible weakness in the President's plan is that while it designates that the state must provide all the services currently provided by Head Start, it does not say that the states have to use and enforce the current Head Start standards. This was the point that Congressman Miller was making when saying you could have the services there but that doesn't guarantee they're going to be high quality.

The federal Head Start program has developed a quality control system in the ten regional offices which monitor each Head Start program every three years with continuation of the Head Start grant contingent on correcting any deficiencies or deviation from the standards. No state has such a well-developed quality control mechanism that I know of.

The Clinton Administration developed outcomes-based assessments for each and every Head Start center to guarantee that each center achieve its own designated goals which must meet Congress' 1998 mandate that the overarching goal of Head Start is school readiness.

The Bush Administration is currently strengthening this further by designating particular tests that children in centers must show progress on over the course of their fourth year rights.

However, I concur with both the Clinton and Bush Administration effort to demand a common ability in the form of evidence of efficiency in reaching the accepted goals of Head Start from every center.

Such efforts can of course be conducted well or badly. Head Start some years back put into place the Faces Study investigating the progress of Head Start children on a wide variety of measures in 40 randomly selected Head Start centers, and then following the children's progress after they entered public schools.

The second cohort has now been collected and seems contingent, looks promising, and the followup in kindergarten looks promising.

Finally, Head Start currently has in place a rigorous national impact study of Head Start as ordered by Congress in the 1998 reauthorization. It is odd that the Bush Administration would propose such a major change in Head Start before weighing the results of this important study.

Compared to these federal quality efforts the state record for quality appears to me pretty anemic. States that run Title I of the ESEA for about the same 38-year period Head Start has been in existence, over all that time the states have never been able to mount quality controls, meaningful parent involvement or comprehensive services like those provided by Head Start.

Even the Department of Education responsible to Congress for the conduct of this large program insisted the states do so but they did not comply.

State child care and development block grant programs do not pretend to have anything to do with school readiness. They're essentially custodial programs whose prime purpose is to permit poor parents to enter the work force. In most places in this country the head caregiver in these sites has no more than a high school education.

For very young children with disabilities served by the states under Part H of the IDEA Legislation, the states deal with this primarily by sending many of these children to Early Head Start. Head Start has made it a priority to serve children with disabilities for decades now, which states have not done.

Finally, a word more about state-run pre-school programs. The only Governor to date who has publicly stated that his state will propose to run Head Start is Governor Rowland of my home state of Connecticut. I helped develop the state program in Connecticut, school readiness.

Just one fact. While I see quality in our Head Start program in Connecticut research by Walter Gilliam clearly indicates we have yet to achieve quality in the state-run school readiness programs.

Given the budgetary problems many states are having, this is a very poor time to entrust Head Start dollars to states. Many are in the process of scaling back their pre-school efforts. Governor Pataki has proposed terminating New York's universal pre-school program. Massachusetts and Tennessee have cut their programs. Even full-day kindergarten which grew tremendously in numbers in the days of budget surpluses are now scaling back to part day.

There are two goals that can be found in the Bush Administration's program with which I heartily agree. Both can be accomplished without the risk of moving Head Start to the states.

The Bush Administration would like a stronger educational component in Head Start with a grater emphasis on literacy and numeracy. This requires better qualified teachers than Head Start has. Congress in 1998 took a step in the right direction by insisting 50 percent of Head Start teachers must have at least an AA degree by 2003. Head Start is to be congratulated for meeting this goal.

Congress and Head Start should now follow the recommendations of the National Research Council's Eager to Learn panel and see that every lead teacher in Head Start has a BA in Early Childhood Education.

The problem of course is that Head Start's pay for lead teachers is not enough to attract BA level teachers. President Bush's proposal to increase by only two percent stands in the way of his own stated goals for Head Start, namely a stronger educational component. There's no

mystery about how you get a stronger educational component. Hire BAs as lead teachers. All the research shows us that there's a relationship between children's outcomes and the educational level, the final degree achieved by an early childhood educator.

The Bush Administration would like to see a better coordinated interface between the goals of the Head Start program and public schools that the Head Start children will attend. The 1998 reauthorization required the same thing. I actually suggested the same thing in the early 1970s when Head Start mounted its developmental continuity effort.

Senator Kennedy pursued the same goal when he authorized a legislation that led to the Head Start transition project which the [inaudible]'s conducted.

Several Head Start programs have developed closer interface with local schools. I'm not sure decisionmakers in the White House know what's going on all over this country in Head Start. There's a lot of coordination already going on. I think particularly of such cities as Independence, Missouri, Austin, Texas, and Denver, Colorado. These models could easily be adopted by Head Start programs throughout the nation.

I have proposed, I am proposing today a task force, and I can think of no person better able to lead that task force than Wade Horn, a task force parallel to the wonderful task force in the Clinton years called Head Start Quality Improvement and Expansion, bringing together people in Head Start, the Department of Education, the Department of Health and Human Services, and develop for us an outline of how the coordination we see in scattered places around the country in Head Start can be made a universal model that can be placed everywhere, thus achieving the coordination that the Administration wants, the Congress wants, and I want.

Thank you,

MS. KANE: Thank you.

Henry?

MR. HENRY JOHNSON: Good morning. Let me acknowledge the Brookings Institution for conducting this meeting on such an important issue and the presenters and the audience. Many of you are national leaders on this issue anyway.

I guess the essential question that is associated with what we are discussing is how does a society improve school readiness for pre-school children. How do we as a society attack this problem?



I think an obvious consideration is how do we organize a service delivery process that educates parents, expectant parents and students, and the whole society? We all know the association between what happens during the pre-school years and the likelihood of success in school.

Just by way of striking this home for me, I was coming back from a meeting in North Carolina several months ago not long after being in a meeting with Craig Ramey at Barksdale's home, talking about just these issues. And the logic escapes me, but I was coming from North Carolina to Mississippi by way of Dallas, Texas. [Laughter] If you've been to the airport there, to go from one terminal to the other you have to get on a tram. So I got on the tram and there were three other individuals with me. At one end an elderly gentleman reading or doing something; in the middle, a mom and her child. The child was probably six, somewhere in there, from five to seven with real thick glasses, and I was at the other end.

You could look into the little girl's eyes and you could tell that the light was on and somebody was home. I just could sense that. She would make eye contact. And during the course of the trip she kind of inched over towards me, and then she started to engage in a conversation. Mom went ballistic, and did all the things that we know antithetical to cognitive development, to language development. The mom got profane, in just the harshest of tones she reprimanded the child. The man doesn't want to be bothered with you, and sit down and be quiet, I didn't tell you you could get up, and those kinds of things. And you could literally see the countenance of this child fall. You could see it in her face.

But kids are remarkably resilient. So over the next couple of minutes she kind of recouped and she started again. And mom went even more ballistic.

Now if mom, I'm presuming mom, and I'm also presuming unmarried, there was no wedding band. But whoever that custodial individual is, understood that there is a proper versus an improper way to interact with the child in that environment, and in fact the kid might have discovered a new world by talking with this individual. Now the mom didn't know me from anybody, so I'm sure there was a fear factor. But in her mind that child's place was to be quiet and still and near her.

Well somehow we've got, as a society, to make sure that individuals who have kids understand the importance of proper interaction in the home or wherever the child is prior to coming to school.

There are a lot of ways to do that. Quite frankly I'm ambivalent as to this proposal. On the one hand I am convinced that schooling, particularly public schooling, needs to extend beyond the age of five. I'm not sure I'll have a lot of support on that because there are a whole lot of folks who don't want the government teaching their kids that early. Who want the government to stay away from their kids for a whole host of reasons. But I think as a society if we are going

to deal with the issue of school readiness and how to grow our people, how to grow our economy, etc., how to grow our society to be civil and so forth, then we need to deal with that issue.

I have in fact seen in Mississippi, and I've only been there since August, a growing interest in more collaboration among the different service providers, pre-school and in-school. Now whether that growing interest would occur if there were not this, to use some of the language, threat of this program being turned over to state education agencies or to Governors, I don't know. But I know that this concern is clearly there.

In my first week on the job, the first week of August, my very first week, I met with the state Head Start leaders, and there was this concern. And I said then and I still hold to it, I'm not soliciting this responsibility. If it is assigned to the state agencies, however it comes, then we will do our best to successfully implement it. I do know one thing. We have to make sure that the stakeholders of all sorts are in conversations during the formative stages of policy development. It's disastrous when a policy is imposed without input on individuals who have to make the policy work.

So however this is finally resolved, whether it's through the state education agencies, whether it's through the Governors office or whatever vehicle, those people who have to implement activities to help young kids and families need to be involved in the policymaking steps all along the way. Then I think we'll have success.

I've seen what I think is a wonderful program, at least conceptually, not be successful because there wasn't buy-in. And I've seen programs that I didn't think conceptually were terribly exciting and terribly sound, but I've seen them work because people who were charged with making them work believed in them and wanted them to work. So those are the kinds of things that I worry about and I wonder as we try to implement a stronger school readiness program in Mississippi and nationally because it is in fact, it's almost cliché but it's really true, that the better we do of preparing our kids before school, the better they will do in school, and the better the society will be as a whole.

I'm going to cut mine short. I've essentially said what I needed to say. Thank you.

MS. KANE: Thank you very much.

Ron?



MR. RON HERNDON: I've been a Head Start Director since 1975. We run a full-day program in Portland, Oregon. Over the years I've seen a handful of Administrations, and I've always wondered why they seemed to not want to take advantage of Head Start practitioners. I think people are concerned about Head Start. But the mistake that I've seen so many Administrations make is they come in office knowing what's best for Head Start.

Case in point, just to go back in time a little bit. President Carter came in and he said that he thought Head Start would be better served if it were under the Department of Education. That was a mistake and the Head Start community rallied and helped to persuade Congress, and we were fortunate. We've always had bipartisan support. President Carter moved off of that.

President Reagan came in and if you remember when the gentleman who was head of OMB under Reagan, the first cat, David Stockman. The article he got in trouble with in the Atlantic Magazine, Mr. Stockman said there that his goal when he came in was to zero Head Start out of the budget. Upon leaving he found Head Start was the most cost-effective program the federal government had.

Mr. Reagan also attempted at one point to get rid of full-day Head Start. I know, I run one. There was a proposal, since they weren't increasing the funding hardly at all, they said what we can do, the full-day Head Start program, get rid of them, let them run double sessions, so you increase the number of kids, the same amount of money. Good economics, very good efficiency. We suffered because of that. We weren't able to get the increases. But our parents went all the way to Washington, D.C. to help get that proposal off of the table.

Recently Ed and I were on the same panel that the Clinton Administration came up with to evaluate Head Start and out of it came the idea of Early Head Start, working with children from birth to three. Interestingly enough the panel said a committee of experts should be established to look at this new service and learn from the experiences of others, then come up with the legislation to bring this about. The Clinton Administration ignored that. Almost before the ink was dry on the report, they had legislation in Congress to establish Early Head Start and I think most people -- I have an Early Head Start program. If most people are honest they'll tell you the first couple of years of Early Head Start, they were a mess. Many mistakes were made, there were no performance standards initially, they did not learn from experiences that people had in the field, like in migrant programs that had been serving children birth through five for years parent/child service. They didn't learn from them.

So I say that to frame what is occurring with this Administration. Mistakes are being made in addressing helping Head Start children and families.

One, when President Bush was Governor Bush, he said then that he was going to run for office. He said then that Head Start should be put in the Department of Education to help us address literacy. We sent our staff down and talked with the Governor's office from NHSA to say that's a mistake, Governor, if you do that for these reasons.

I keep hearing people repeat about literacy efforts in Texas and they keep talking about this one particular center in Dallas called the Cohen Center. I know the director of the program. Her name is Wanda Smith. She wrote a letter to the Dallas Morning News and said to then Governor Bush, it would be a mistake to put Head Start in the Department of Education. She was on that panel that this lady that was here earlier talked about, bragged about. She sat on the Governor's most prestigious panel in Texas that addressed pre-school education and she said that it would be a mistake.

Okay, Dr. Horn is here. We've appeared before Mr. Castle's committee about a year and a half ago, and Dr. Horn said Head Start should be moved to the Department of Education. When asked about what research to back it up, Dr. Horn reported that infamous two-letter research. A kid coming into Head Start supposedly knows one letter and when they leave Head Start they know two letters, and this shows that we're doing diddly squat about education.

Well, the authors of the research have said that the mischaracterization of the research, mischaracterization. But to his credit Dr. Horn hasn't used that two-letter bit of research any time lately. But -- Wise man. [Laughter]

Remember first it was to put us in the Department of Education to help us with literacy. Now, a year later, we come back oh no, no, no. We want you to go to the states so you can do a better job of coordination. I said what happened to the literacy effort you're going to save us with in the Department of Education? Now it's better coordination.

Let me tell you something. I'm from the state of Oregon. Oregon is one of three states in the country that uses Head Start performance standards with its state funds. We did not need the federal government to tell us to do that. We did not need someone to come down and tell us we needed to coordinate. We met with the state legislature, got it written in the legislation. And by the way, Oregon is cutting back on its funding. I know. I just lost \$130,000 since January.

So this idea about coordination is not taking place, I don't know where that's coming from but it's a mistaken idea. We coordinate with housing authorities, public schools, welfare department, you name it we coordinate with it. If Head Start programs weren't doing that, the money we get is so meager we would not be able to run quality programs.

Now I'm hearing one of the things that Head Start doesn't do, to show that some changes need to be made beyond coordination, is that yes, kids in Head Starts make gains, and Dr. Horn I heard you say this one, but they're not doing as well as middle class kids.

Well my goodness, when did we ever say that Head Start was going to solve the societal problems of this country and a kid in Head Start for nine months is going to be doing as well as a middle class kid? We never made that claim. We said these kids would be healthier, we would give them comprehensive services, and they would be ready to learn. That's our claim. But now we're being judged by a different standard.

Now remember the bouncing ball. First it was literacy, then it was lack of coordination, now these kids are not doing as well as middle class kids. I think at some point in time we have to stop this.

What we were charged to do we've done well. Can we get better? Absolutely.

And let me say this last point on literacy. We all need to be a little bit humble about this. And I'm all for research. But I guess I can remember times when research said that people of my complexion couldn't do as well as white folks. I remember research that talked about phrenology and the lumps in your head describe how well you could think. So I think we need to be a little bit humbled.

But until 1998 every Administration, both Republican and Democrat, told practitioners, Head Start practitioners, do not teach children to read in Head Start. I know. I was there. They told us it wasn't developmentally appropriate. We had reviewers that came in and told us, some who were very extreme, take the alphabet down off the wall -- and this occurred, Dr. Horn's sitting here, when he was in town the last time -- take the alphabet down off the wall and if you really fought it, they said just don't put it in order. Put it Z, V, Y. Oh, yeah.

So now in 1998, and all these folks are talking about literacy. Head Start programs were doing what they were told to do.

Now that people have come into the modern age and say yeah, it makes sense to help children to become literate at an early age, sure we've embraced it and we're moving forward with it and programs are doing well. But for somebody to stand up and say you're not doing enough in literacy, tell the truth. Everybody in every Administration said don't do that to early childhood practitioners, except, our program broke the rule. We did it. Except this is what always used to kind of tee me off, that same poor parent that you were told not to teach to read in Head Start is by the grace of God, they hit the lottery and they could take their kid down to Montessori, they tried to teach them reading and numeracy and all these other things, but for low income kids we said oh that's too high for them. You're going to do something to screw up their brain if you try to teach them to read.

I'm going to be like you, Doc, I'm going to bring this to a close here. Be humble. The reason for moving us into the Department of Education does not make sense. The states are broke. As I said, broke as the ten commandments. Yeah, they want the money but taking the money is not going to give you a quality product and Doc over here has a ton of research to show that the state-run pre-school programs do not have the quality of Head Start. This would be a disaster. And doing this would dismantle Head Start.

MS. KANE: Thank you very much. We'll give Wade a chance to respond later.

Helen, can you play cleanup here and pull all these pieces together?



MS. HELEN BLANK: If the Administration was serious about making a difference in the lives of vulnerable children it wouldn't be moving in the direction it's moving in.

First of all, it would be fully funding Early Head Start because it would understand that if you really are going to help the poorest children it is more than a nine-month injection and if you want children to have good vocabulary, you want their parent to be educated, we know how important maternal education is to school success, we would be fully funding Early Head Start instead of serving 60,000 babies and toddlers and they're not rounded anywhere else. We would be fully funding Head Start. We would be adding \$11.25 billion to child care over the next five years to serve one million more children and improve the quality. Not cutting 200,000 children out of child care over the next five years while increasing work requirements and increasing the demand for child care. We would be improving and expanding the child and adult care food program so more children have access to nutritional meals.

We would not be reshuffling the deck chairs on the Titanic. We know the states are in the midst of unprecedented deficits. They are in chaos and they are cutting programs now. This is a dangerous time to think about giving them an enormous new responsibility.

Ten states in 2002 cut their pre-K programs. Ed talked about some states that have cut. Ohio, one of the stellar states, it had committed itself and was fully funding Head Start with state dollars. It has replaced, it will by the end of this year, every single state dollar with TANF dollars, and we now those TANF dollars are not stable, and it is now proposing to cut 4,000 more children from Head Start. Tennessee is proposing to cut 60 percent of its pre-K classrooms.

Families needing child care are in extraordinary distress. Over the next few years we are going to see thousands and thousands of low income children of working families in child care settings that are not developmentally appropriate. They're probably not even safe.

In D.C., like Tennessee and Connecticut, low income working families cannot even apply for child care assistance. In D.C. like other cities, child care programs in low income areas are shutting down because poor families don't have any resources to use them.

What states are going to be doing pre-K programs? Well we talk about a lot of states doing Pre-K, and states have been, and we are proud of this, expanding their investments in pre-K. But while 45 states invest in pre-K, the bulk of the money, 75 percent, is in just ten states. One of them, New York proposing to eliminate their pre-K program.

Who will apply for pre-K funds? Florida, as you heard, has passed a referendum for universal pre-K. There are currently 53,000 children on the waiting list for child care in Florida. The Governor's budget, in an attempt to deal with the pre-K referendum, proposed that only families on welfare and four year olds receive child care assistance. Is that moving us forward?

When Connecticut's Governor testified before the House he talked about his pre-K program. Connecticut has a fairly strong pre-K program. Its teacher standards are not a BA degree. They are less than Head Start's. He said he could serve more of the 15,000 children on the wait list for Connecticut's pre-K program if he got the Head Start money. No one pointed out to him that the Head Start dollars for next year are barely above inflation. How could you serve those 15,000 children unless you dilute the program?

Connecticut has now 5,000 children on the waiting list for child care assistance. The Governor's proposal announced the week he testified, proposed that 30,000 more children be cut from child care over the next three years, and meanwhile, thousands of families were losing health insurance.

What about comprehensive services? In 22 states when the Children's Defense Fund did a report on pre-K in 1998, they told us that the reason, one of the reasons they don't do comprehensive services is because they don't have the resources or the funding to do comprehensive services. Where are the resources for comprehensive services in this plan?

What about professional development? Only about half the states require BAs. The majority don't. But let's point out that most states have professional development plans. This is not something new. They can't implement the plans. In 31 states you can go work in a child care center with no training in early childhood development. Who are you going to coordinate with when you have these kinds of requirements? The average child care teacher makes \$16,350 a year. I agree with Ed. If you want quality, you require teachers to have BA degrees, but you can't do that without additional resources.

What about accountability? You heard about Head Start's extraordinary accountability mechanism. Head Start is looked at more than any other federal program that I have ever seen. In 21 states their pre-K programs only receive desktop reviews or no monitoring. We know the states licensing programs are being cut back drastically now. State licenses in many states have huge caseloads, don't have the ability to accept programs. We see state licensing improvements threatened. Tennessee had to roll back its improvements, unprecedented in Tennessee, in child/staff ratios. They don't have the resources to implement their new transportation safety requirements.

What about standards? Unfortunately we have the experience when the states are offered a program they lobby hard for flexibility. I can't believe that many Governors, and this is in their self interest. They don't have the resources. Of course they would lobby for flexibility.

When the child care block grant was reauthorized during welfare reform it took two years to convince the Congress to maintain the minimal standards set by the states and the quality set-aside because the Governors were lobbying very hard not to have the minimal standard provision or the quality set-aside. They wanted ultimate flexibility. They will ask for ultimate flexibility when Congress is negotiating the Head Start plan.

What about coordination? The Southern Regional Institute did a recent report. It said the coordination problems Head Start is coordinating. Many of the coordination problems with Head Start rest with inadequate state child care policies. They are not states' faults. The states are continually wrestling with affordability versus quality so it is very difficult to find the resources and to keep children in child care with Head Start dollars because of a roulatic child care policy. When Head Start received large increases under the Clinton Administration, many Head Start programs began to operate in child care programs. Ten thousand children in Ohio's Head Start programs are in child care. Why did they do this coordination? Because they had the resources to add more children and they felt it made more sense to add them in child care programs.

Governor Hunt in North Carolina showed us that coordination could work if you had resources. He created Smart Start. He gave local councils almost \$300 million to fill in the gaps, and in North Carolina in every county Head Start providers sat with child care providers and other members of the community and they coordinated because they had the resources to fill in the gaps. At the same time Governor Hunt added resources to get families off the waiting list, to improve rates for child care providers. Right now Smart Start is being cut. One of the houses in North Carolina cut their Teach program which provides education and bonuses to child care providers who improved their education, and the waiting lists in North Carolina are growing.

Three's and four's. Who are we talking about serving? In 18 states the pre-K programs only serve four year olds. I don't think we've ever seen a maintenance of effort provision that has

been enforceable. So who are we kidding if we're talking about these huge state deficits to assume that states will maintain their effort?

Finally, I think we should be very concerned about where we are heading in assessment. The Administration proposal says states will assess children and make reports public. We've see what's going on with No Child Left Behind. Only 12 states are on track to meeting the No Child Left Behind requirements. What will happen when you assess children who are poor without putting in place -- we don't have anything in states that looks like a public school infrastructure. The infrastructure in early childhood. We're going to see enormous pressure with failing pre-schools to change the way we do child development without no adequate debate.

Thank you.

MS. KANE: Thank you, Helen.

I want to open it up to you now because you've been very patient and sat a long time, so why don't we go ahead and take questions.

QUESTION: Todd Cline. I'm just here as a guest.

I don't know the answer to this question which may be novel that I'm about to ask, but how much would it cost to fully fund all eligible Head Start children? And is there any movement to get that into Congress?

MS. BLANK: You could actually fund all the eligible three's and four's with a little over \$2 billion next year if you chose, if Congress chose. It costs more if you do it over a five year period.

MR. HERNDON: In 1990 Congress said it would serve all eligible Head Start children by 1994. It's a promise they've made but they've never kept.

QUESTION: I didn't hear specific ways that Head Start and the early care field could coordinate more. Some specific examples that are not occurring like transportation. It now has some new regulations for Head Start I know that are extremely extremely costly to Head Start programs that are causing a lot of problems and I've not heard any response from the Administration to help alleviate that problem, but you have states coordinating that way. Training, recruitment.

Could you elaborate a little more on maybe some additional ways aside from the social service agencies, health agencies that Head Start already coordinate with, the broader field. What are some additional ways?

MR. ZIGLER: One of the things that's come out of this meeting loud and clear for everybody, we've heard a Democrat, we've heard a Republican, we've heard the Administration. We've heard everybody say Head Start needs better coordination. I think that's true.

We heard from Ron about what he's doing which has always been a kind of a stellar program. There are stellar programs. Denver is a very good example. Denver Head Start works with the State Department of Education, works with the school system in Denver. They developed their own set of standards, they developed an assessment system, all Head Start in coordination with these other players to assess the standards that they mutually developed.

What I have proposed, which is -- Head Start has a long history of this. You've been a player in many of these. When Head Start wants to do something big, what we've done in the past is we've set up a task force. We've set up a task force, we get the wisdom of the field, they sit on that task force, we bring in the players that know something about government. That task force, and you've probably served on the Head Start Quality Improvement and Expansion Task Force which became the roadmap for the Clinton Administration which they followed beautifully, by the way, in improving the quality of Head Start. Head Start has never stood pat. We've all said that. Nobody's saying stand pat. Always improve, move forward.

I think what I'm calling for is something big. I'm calling for a very high level person to run it the way Olivia Golden ran Donna Shalala's program. So Wade Horn is sitting right here with us. Why not call together the wisdom of this nation, sit down and develop a roadmap for great coordination because what we have not done in Head Start is taken these really good ideas that happened in Oregon or happened in Denver, and make them national. Put them -- But that's the job for the Head Start Bureau which is under Wade.

So I'm calling for a task force to really deal with what Republicans, Democrats and the Administration all say they want, and Head Start would like too. Good coordination.

MR. JOHNSON: Among several initiatives in Mississippi, two things I think particularly are appropriate to the discussion.

The legislature established an oversight committee consisting of representatives from all the state agencies that provide services to this population. We're supposed to make sure that there's better coordination as we deliver services.

Even prior to that we had established an early childhood interagency coordinating council to essentially address the same thing, but the legislature wanted to put the weight of the legislature behind this kind of effort.

So more coordination is going to happen. Again, possibly because of the threat of what might happen if we don't coordinate better.

MR. WADE HORN: First let me say that I consider Ed Zigler to be the E.F. Hutton of the early childhood education field and when Ed speaks we all should listen very carefully to what he's saying. He's always been I like to consider a mentor for me and certainly a great colleague. So when he speaks, I listen very carefully.

Part of what Ed said was that there seems to be agreement on both sides of the aisle and even within the Head Start community that we haven't gotten coordination perfect yet. So there's lots of was to get it better. This is one idea, and you heard Margaret Spellings today say there may be other ideas. But the goal, it seems to me, is to ensure we are better able to coordinate these various systems for ultimately the outcomes for kids.

Ron, who I've also had the great pleasure of working with for over almost 15 years -- I had hair and he wasn't quite as gray -- [Laughter] -- I think it's very important what you say about listening to the provider community.

I will tell you, though, that I was actually in the first Bush commission, and we said to put the alphabet back on the walls, not to take it down in case anybody -- And I didn't say jumble the letters up.

MR. HERNDON: People in the field didn't get the message.

MR. HORN: I think at the heart of the President's proposal --

(END SIDE)

MR. JOHNSON: -- have success. If Head Start were assigned to my department then the parents would be right at the table.

MS. BLANK: Unfortunately I don't know that most school systems run that way. I think that is really the right goal.

I will never forget a parent testifying on the Head Start Committee on Quality and Expansion saying I never felt valued, and I think you hear countless stories like this, as a person because I was poor until I came to Head Start. But when my child started kindergarten, it was all over with. I wasn't welcome.

MR. ZIGLER: We didn't just invent Head Start last week. It's been there 38 years. Thirty-eight years we've championed. In the early days it was murky. Maximum feasible participation. Then we set a policy about the policy councils giving parents -- But we knew back then the wisdom of those early planners of which I was just one, was that parents raise children.

Head Start doesn't raise children. Schools don't raise children. And if you want a functional child you have to have a functional parent, just like you learned on your train trip.

So schools simply have not picked up parent involvement to the degree that they should. Things may start getting better because Head Start is particularly interested in the first goal of education, of the Educate America Act, which is school readiness. Every child shall be school ready to profit from the school experience.

But there's an eighth goal -- parent involvement in schools. Parent involvement in schools. Head Start has been preaching that for 38 years. What has taken so long? And the reason that has come about, because we now have, and we have in the new Faces report, data after data after data that shows the more the parent is involved in the schooling -- pre-school or school age of the child -- the better off this child does. So parents are absolutely critical. Head Start can be proud. Wade is correct. Wade pays attention to parents. Parents have played an absolutely central role and did from day one of planning at Head Start. And as one of the founders I'm very proud of that. We were a little bit ahead of our time but the rest of the world is beginning to catch up with Head Start. But giving Head Start to the rest of the world and say hey, try to catch up with us, why risk it? We're already doing it.

MR. HERNDON: One of the comments that I've heard from parents is that they're frightened at the prospect of the program going to states because they have very little if any influence over state government, state policies. State programs that are currently run, you want to talk about Title I that say that they're supposed to have parental involvement, as the researchers say, it has not been very robust. There are a lot of weaknesses in that. In many places it's a paper parent parental involvement.

We didn't get a chance to talk about the national assessment which is, again, this is what happens when you try to do things from Washington, D.C., to assess all kids, all four year olds. I'll just leave it with this one.

One of the questions as they show these kids these vehicles and they ask -- these are little Head Start age kids. They ask the kids which one is the camper?

Now the question in my mind is, even if the kid could tell you which one is the camper, what's the significance of that? And there are many many communities where kids never see a doggone camper.

So the idea that we're so smart, once again, we're so smart that we can come up with something in Washington, D.C. that's going to be designed to tell us something about four year olds all over the country. It's a horrendous mistake. You have locally designed assessments, use them. We assess kids in a number of different things locally and they get reported on the PIR,

use that same system to find out about how kids are doing with literacy rather than wasting a whole bunch of money on designing something.

And nobody's talking about assessing all these little kids in day care where most of them are. What are we doing with them? Why us? Why pick on us? Go help somebody else.
[Laughter]

MS. KANE: We're going to let Helen have the last word and then move on to the next panel.

MS. BLANK: I have one final comment on parent involvement. I think it's very striking.

I believe it was a '93 education reauthorization that required Title I programs to meet Head Start performance standards, but when push came to shove the performance standard that was eliminated was parent involvement.

MR. JOHNSON: Exactly.

MS. KANE: Thank you very much to all of you for sharing your insights and wisdom.

[Applause]