

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1474

To amend the Head Start Act to designate up to 200 Head Start centers as Centers of Excellence in Early Childhood, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 28 (legislative day, JULY 21), 2003

Mr. ALEXANDER introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To amend the Head Start Act to designate up to 200 Head Start centers as Centers of Excellence in Early Childhood, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Head Start Centers
5 of Excellence Act of 2003”.

6 **SEC. 2. CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD.**

7 The Head Start Act is amended by inserting after
8 section 641A (42 U.S.C. 9836a) the following:

1 **“SEC. 641B. CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE IN EARLY CHILD-**
 2 **HOOD.**

3 “(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

4 “(1) CENTER OF EXCELLENCE.—The term
 5 ‘center of excellence’ means a Center of Excellence
 6 in Early Childhood designated under subsection (b).

7 “(2) STATE COUNCIL.—The term ‘State coun-
 8 cil’ means a State Council for Excellence in Early
 9 Childhood described in subsection (e).

10 “(b) DESIGNATION AND BONUS GRANTS.—The Sec-
 11 retary shall establish a program under which the Secretary
 12 shall—

13 “(1) designate up to 200 exemplary Head Start
 14 agencies as Centers of Excellence in Early Child-
 15 hood; and

16 “(2) make bonus grants to the designated cen-
 17 ters of excellence to carry out the activities described
 18 in subsection (d).

19 “(c) APPLICATION AND DESIGNATION.—

20 “(1) APPLICATION.—

21 “(A) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible to re-
 22 ceive designation as a center of excellence under
 23 subsection (b), a Head Start agency in a State
 24 shall be nominated by the Governor of the State
 25 and shall submit an application to the Secretary

1 at such time, in such manner, and containing
2 such information as the Secretary may require.

3 “(B) CONTENTS.—At a minimum, the ap-
4 plication shall include—

5 “(i) evidence that the Head Start pro-
6 gram carried out by the agency has im-
7 proved the school readiness of, and en-
8 hanced academic outcomes for, children
9 who have participated in the program;

10 “(ii) evidence that the program meets
11 or exceeds Head Start standards and per-
12 formance measures described in sub-
13 sections (a) and (b) of section 641A, as
14 evidenced by successful completion of pro-
15 grammatic and monitoring reviews, and
16 has no citations for substantial deficiencies
17 with respect to the standards and meas-
18 ures;

19 “(iii) information demonstrating the
20 existence of a collaborative partnership be-
21 tween the Head Start agency and the Gov-
22 ernor’s office;

23 “(iv) a nomination letter from the
24 Governor, demonstrating the agency’s abil-
25 ity to carry out the coordination, transi-

tion, and training services of the program to be carried out under the bonus grant involved, including coordination of activities with State and local agencies that provide early childhood services to children and families in the community served by the agency; and

“(v) information demonstrating the existence of, or the agency’s plan to establish, a local council for excellence in early childhood, which shall include representatives of all the institutions, agencies, and groups involved in the work of the center for and the local provision of services to eligible children and other at-risk children, and their families.

“(2) SELECTION.—In selecting agencies to designate as centers of excellence under subsection (b), the Secretary shall designate at least 1 from each of the 50 States and the District of Columbia.

“(3) TERM OF DESIGNATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), the Secretary shall designate a Head Start agency as a center of excellence for a 5-year term. During the period of that designa-

tion, subject to the availability of appropriations, the agency shall be eligible to receive a bonus grant under subsection (b).

“(B) REVOCATION.—The Secretary may revoke an agency’s designation under subsection (b) if the Secretary determines that the agency is not demonstrating adequate performance.

“(4) AMOUNT OF BONUS GRANT.—The Secretary shall base the amount of funding provided through a bonus grant made under subsection (b) to a center of excellence for the center’s staff costs on the number of children served at the center of excellence. The Secretary shall make such a bonus grant in an amount of not less than \$100,000 per year.

“(d) USE OF FUNDS.—

“(1) ACTIVITIES.—A center of excellence that receives a bonus grant under subsection (b) may use the funds made available through the bonus grant—

“(A) to provide Head Start services to additional eligible children;

“(B) to better meet the needs of working families in the community served by the center by serving more children in Early Head Start programs or in full-working-day, full calendar year Head Start programs;

1 “(C) to model and disseminate best prac-
2 tices for achieving early academic success, in-
3 cluding achieving school readiness and devel-
4 oping preliteracy and prenumeracy skills for at-
5 risk children, and to provide seamless service
6 delivery for eligible children and their families;

7 “(D) to coordinate early childhood and so-
8 cial services available in the community served
9 by the center for at-risk children (prenatal
10 through age 8) and their families, including
11 services provided by child care providers, health
12 care providers, and providers of income-based
13 financial assistance, and other State and local
14 services;

15 “(E) to provide training and cross training
16 for Head Start teachers and staff, and to de-
17 velop agency leaders;

18 “(F) to provide effective transitions be-
19 tween Head Start programs and elementary
20 school, to facilitate ongoing communication be-
21 tween Head Start and elementary school teach-
22 ers concerning children receiving Head Start
23 services, and to provide training and technical
24 assistance to providers who are public elemen-
25 tary school teachers and other staff of local

educational agencies, child care providers, family service providers, and other providers of early childhood services, to help the providers described in this subparagraph increase their ability to work with low-income, at-risk children and their families; and

“(G) to carry out other activities determined by the center to improve the overall quality of the Head Start program carried out by the agency and the program carried out under the bonus grant involved.

“(2) INVOLVEMENT OF OTHER HEAD START AGENCIES AND PROVIDERS.—Not later than the second year for which the center receives a bonus grant under subsection (b), the center, in carrying out activities under this subsection, shall work with the center’s delegate agencies, several additional Head Start agencies, and other providers of early childhood services in the community involved, to encourage the agencies and providers described in this sentence to carry out model programs. The center shall establish the local council described in subsection (c)(1)(B)(v).

“(e) STATE COUNCILS FOR EXCELLENCE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD.—

1 “(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall
 2 make grants to States to enable the States to estab-
 3 lish State Councils for Excellence in Early Child-
 4 hood. The State council established by a State shall
 5 include representatives of Head Start agencies, pub-
 6 lic elementary schools, providers of early childhood
 7 services (including family service providers), and
 8 other entities working with centers of excellence in
 9 the State. The State council shall be chaired by a
 10 Director of a center of excellence in the State.

11 “(2) FUNCTIONS.—The State council shall work
 12 with the State Head Start Office of Collaboration.
 13 The State council shall review and compile informa-
 14 tion on the work of the centers of excellence in the
 15 State, collecting and disseminating information on
 16 the findings of the centers, and identifying barriers
 17 to and opportunities for success in that work that
 18 could be addressed at a State level. The State Head
 19 Start Office of Collaboration shall address the bar-
 20 riers and opportunities.

21 “(f) RESEARCH AND REPORTS.—

22 “(1) RESEARCH.—The Secretary shall make a
 23 grant to an independent organization to conduct re-
 24 search on the ability of the centers of excellence to
 25 improve the school readiness of children receiving

1 Head Start services, and to positively impact school
2 results in the earliest grades. The organization shall
3 also conduct research to measure the success of the
4 centers of excellence at encouraging the center's del-
5 egate agencies, additional Head Start agencies, and
6 other providers of early childhood services in the
7 communities involved to meet measurable improve-
8 ment goals, particularly in the area of school readi-
9 ness.

10 “(2) REPORT.—Not later than 48 months after
11 the date of enactment of the Head Start Centers of
12 Excellence Act of 2003, the organization shall pre-
13 pare and submit to the Secretary and Congress a re-
14 port containing the results of the research described
15 in paragraph (1).

16 “(g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
17 are authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2004 and
18 each subsequent fiscal year—

19 “(1) \$90,000,000 to make bonus grants to cen-
20 ters of excellence under subsection (b) to carry out
21 activities described in subsection (d);

22 “(2) \$2,500,000 to pay for the administrative
23 costs of the Secretary in carrying out this section,
24 including the cost of a conference of centers of excel-
25 lence;

1 “(3) \$5,500,000 to make grants to States for
2 State councils to carry out the activities described in
3 subsection (e); and

4 “(4) \$2,000,000 for research activities de-
5 scribed in subsection (f).”.

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