



National Indian Education Association

110 Maryland Avenue, N.E., Suite 104

Washington, DC 20002

(202) 544-7290 / (202) 544-7293 fax

NIEA RESOLUTION #06-16

Title: REAUTHORIZATION OF THE HEAD-START ACT

WHEREAS, the National Indian Education Association (NIEA) was established in 1969 for the purpose of advocating, planning, and promoting the unique and special educational needs of American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; and

WHEREAS, NIEA as the largest national Indian organization of American Indians, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian educators, administrators, parents, and students in the United States, provides a forum to discuss and act upon issues affecting the education of Indian and Native people; and

WHEREAS, through its unique relationship with Indian nations and tribes, the federal government has established programs and resources to meet the educational needs of American Indians, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiians, residing on and off their reserved or non-reserved homelands; and

WHEREAS, the Head Start Program are vital to Indian Country and the reauthorization of the Head Start Act is a critically important opportunity to refine a program that has made an astounding difference for Indian Children. Over the last 40 years Indian Head Start has played a major role in the education of Indian Children and in the well-being of many tribal communities. Of the approximately 575 federally recognized tribes, 28% participate in Head Start Programs, with a funded enrollment of 23,374 children. These programs employ approximately 6,449 individuals of whom 3,263 are either former or current Head Start parents. There are another 35,395 volunteers, 22,095 of whom are parents; and

WHEREAS, the National Indian Head Start Directors Association (NIHSDA) and the Southwest Consortium of Indian Head Start Programs Inc. strongly urges the Congress to reauthorize the Head Start Act incorporating a number of provisions that will strengthen the Indian Head Start Program; and

WHEREAS, both the House and the Senate in the 108th Congress worked on Head Start Legislation. The Senate spent a lot of time on Indian issues, including a hearing held by the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, and a Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee staff visit to Indian Head Start programs in the Southwest. As a results, the Senate bill (s.1940) and accompany HELP Committee report (Sen. Rept. 108-208) addressed in detail Indian Head Start issues. The House Education Committee indicated that it would follow the Senate's lead on Indian issues; and

WHEREAS, the NIHSDA and the Southwest Consortium of Indian Head Start Programs Inc. strongly supports the Indian Head Start language in the Senate bill accompany report and urges the new Head Start reauthorization legislation in both the House and Senate retain the Senate language, as well as add several additional beneficial provisions that the Senate did not address which is outlined in the NIHSDA Reauthorization of Head Start Act, an Opportunity to Improve a Grant Program; and

WHEREAS, the All Indian Pueblo Council (AIPC) was presented information of the Reauthorization of the Head Start Act at a duly called meeting of AIPC; and

WHEREAS, the AIPC strongly supports the efforts of the National Indian Head Start Directors Association and the Southwest Consortium of Indian Head Start Program Inc.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that NIEA does hereby strongly recommend that the United States Congress pass the Reauthorization of the Head Start Program as recommended.

CERTIFICATION

I do hereby certify that the following resolution was dully considered and passed by the NIEA Board of Directors on November 30, 2006 at which a quorum was present.

Verlie Ann Malina Wright

Dr. Verlie Ann Malina Wright, President (2006-07)
National Indian Education Association