

June 4, 2002

Mr. James Colvin, Collaboration Grant Coordinator
Division of Community Programs
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
Atlanta Federal Center
61 Forsyth Street, Suite 4M60
Atlanta, GA 30303-8909

Dear Mr. Colvin:

I am pleased to offer my support for the continued funding of Mississippi's Head Start Collaboration Office.

Mississippi has laid a strong foundation for education and desires to continue to take sound and innovative measures to strengthen educational opportunities for children within our state. We are particularly concerned with the quality of experiences provided our preschool children throughout the state. Work has been done to assess the quality of services available for preschool children in Mississippi. However, a long-range plan with strategic goals is needed as we work to improve the quality of services for children.

The Head Start Collaboration Office is in a position to work with agencies and organizations across the state to help with this effort. The office has played an important role in encouraging collaboration between various state agencies responsible for providing services for preschool children in the past and is poised to continue its efforts. My office is committed to working with the Head Start Collaboration Office as it continues its efforts in the state.

The Head Start Collaboration Office is strategically housed within the Mississippi Department of Education in order to facilitate communication and cooperation between these two agencies. The recent selection of a new project director was completed as a joint effort between Mississippi's Head Start Directors and the Mississippi Department of Education as required in Section 640 (a)(5)(C) of the Head Start Act. I have the assurances of MDE, the Head Start Directors and the new project director that they will continue to work closely together in order to improve early childhood experiences for Mississippi's children.

Thank you for your consideration and assistance.

Very truly yours,

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