

AUTHORIZATION OF HEAD START HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD,
YOUTH AND FAMILIES

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND
THE WORKFORCE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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FIELD HEARING ON AUTHORIZATION OF HEAD START

Tuesday, July 7, 1998

House of Representatives

Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth and Families

Committee on Education and the Workforce

Washington, D.C.

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POLICY COUNCIL, WESLCO, TEXAS *

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The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 8:30 a.m., in the McAllen City Hall, 1300 Houston Street, Commissioners Courtroom 3rd Floor, McAllen, Texas, Hon. Frank Riggs [chairman of the subcommittee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Riggs, Martinez, and Hinojosa.

Staff Present: Denzel McGuire, Professional Staff Member/Education; Cheryl Johnson, Legislative Associate/Education; and Sarah Shipman, Legislative Assistant, Rep. Hinojosa.

Chairman **Riggs**. Ladies and gentlemen, good morning. My name is Frank Riggs. I represent the First Congressional District of California. That's Northwest California, the other California. I am from the one that, perhaps, most of you are familiar with.

I just want to say that I am delighted to be here this morning in McAllen, Texas, an All-American City, and I could see just when I got in last night and today coming over to the hearing all of the signs of progress and vitality that I am sure factored into the decision to name McAllen an All-American City.

And I am delighted to be here today to chair this third in a series of hearings on the reauthorization of the federal taxpayer-funded Head Start program. This is one of our top priorities in the remaining days of this Congress, the 105th Congress, in our country's history.

To my right is my good friend and fellow Californian, Congressman Matthew Martinez, and he is from the other California, Southern California, and he is the ranking member, the senior-most democrat on our subcommittee.

Also joining us today is a member of the full committee on which the three of us serve, the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and that is your representative, Congressman Ruben Hinojosa.

I am very pleased to be in Congressman Hinojosa's district today, and at this point in time, Congressman Martinez and I are going to defer to Congressman Hinojosa and recognize him for introductions and opening remarks. Congressman Hinojosa.

Mr. **Hinojosa**. Thank you, Chairman Riggs. Is my microphone on? Can everybody hear me in the back?

Thank you. I want to defer from my prepared statement and recognize someone who has just come in, our former Congressman Kiki de la Garza. I want to give you a big round of applause for joining us this morning.

Congressman de la Garza served over 32 years in Congress and has seen how we have been able to take a program as is going to be discussed today from its infancy in the 1960s to where it is today. So we are very happy to have you with us Congressman De La Garza.

Also I want to recognize two individuals sitting to the right of former Congressman de la Garza. Our own County Judge Reynaldo Cuellar who is representing the Hidalgo County Commissioners Court, and certainly one who oversees the Head Start program that we have. We welcome you, County Judge.

We also want to give special recognition to the mayor of our community of McAllen, a great successful attorney, one who has been a civic leader for many, many years, and one who has been a strong advocate of education ever since I met him back in the 1960s when he was a teacher and then an administrator.

And so I would like to ask the mayor if he would like to make some opening remarks.

Mayor Montalvo. Thank you Congressman Hinojosa, and welcome Congressman Riggs and Congressman Martinez. I understand that the two other congressmen had some difficulty getting here, but we are happy to see you here.

I won't hold it against you that you are Republican, because I look at education as a nonpartisan issue. Quality education should be nonpartisan, because I think that is the backbone, obviously, of our country. And if we are to succeed, we need an educated population.

This past Saturday I had the opportunity to converse with Congressman Hinojosa prior to our Fourth of July parade. He told me a little story. I am going to share it with you. I was sharing it with Congressman Riggs earlier this morning.

In the 60s, there was a man that went to Houston and became a dishwasher and later a waiter and then became the owner of the restaurant, and then another restaurant, and another restaurant. After being successful as a businessman, he was invited to be on the board of directors of a bank. He kind of declined at first indicating that he did not have the education. He only had been to school through the second grade.

I also make the distinction between education and schooling. So here we have an individual who is probably well-educated in the area of business and then went on to get a GED, because he did serve on the bank's board of directors, and then he commissioned two teachers to tell him what it took for youngsters to be successful in the first three years.

And they told him, "Well, you need the basic vocabulary of about 400 words." And so he developed what

became known as the Little School of the 400, and then he hired aides and teachers.

This concept later became known as Head Start. I call it Even Start. We are not getting a head start for our kids. I think we want an even start to start at the line wearing tennis shoes and not being barefoot when we start the race.

I welcome you to the city of McAllen. I hope you have a successful hearing today. And from the number of people who are here to testify and the number of people who are here in the audience, I am sure that you will be getting sufficient input for the reauthorization of this very important legislation that impacts millions of kids across this country.

Again, I emphasize that education to me is nonpartisan and that we all need to support it. Welcome to McAllen.

Mr. Hinojosa. Thank you, Mayor. Thank you for that welcome and for your remarks. I want to say good morning and welcome to every one of you who is here. This is the largest public hearing that I have ever participated in, and we have had many.

I want to thank every one of you for making the time to be here. As you know, we are here to discuss the Head Start program in Hidalgo County. We are happy to see graduate students from the University of Texas-Pan American who are in Dr. de los Santos' class. I believe that they are the education leadership class, and we thank you for coming to be a part of this public hearing.

I would like to recognize Chairman Frank Riggs and Democratic Ranking Member Marty Martinez of the House Education and Workforce Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth, and Families. Chairman Frank Riggs is the prestigious chairman of the education subcommittee responsible for special education needs, school lunch, and child nutrition programs, including Head Start and education technology.

He is known in Congress as a maverick and an agent of change. That is particularly why his presence this morning means so much to me and why he will be a very strong force in what happens in the reauthorization of Head Start program.

I am also delighted to welcome my friend and colleague Congressman Matthew we call him Marty Martinez of California. He was first elected to Congress in 1982. Congressman Martinez is one of three leaders on the Education Committee who drive Democratic education initiatives.

During his chairmanship of the Human Resources Subcommittee, his position was defined as the modern-day father of Head Start. He is someone who represents a seasoned voice on the education of America's children.

To both of my distinguished colleagues, thank you for coming to South Texas, and I welcome you.

Let me begin my opening remarks by saying the facts are clear. There is overwhelming evidence that quality early childhood programs, particularly those that closely involve parents, do make a difference in the lives of at-risk children and their families.

Head Start is one of only a few such successful programs in existence. The Head Start program was created in 1964 as part of President Johnson's war on poverty. It is the only national program that addresses the educational, social, health, and emotional needs of at-risk families.

Low-income families face high rates of domestic violence, substance abuse, illiteracy, and other influences that detract from a child's ability to enter school ready to learn and detract from a family's abilities to succeed in the community.

Head Start addresses these factors by involving entire families in a comprehensive program of center-based and in-home services designed to address the needs of children and families.

Head Start works. It has been proven. It helps low-income children arrive at school more ready to learn. It improves intelligence, academic readiness, and achievement. Self-esteem, social behavior, physical health, periodic medical screening, and treatment are part of that Head Start program.

Several studies show that Head Start helps to improve the lives of parents as well. Parents talk more with their children. They participate more frequently in their children's activities and enjoy greater confidence in their ability to cope and interact in society.

Every presidential administration and every Congress since the program's inception has supported Head Start. Republicans and Democrats alike support this program. A vast majority of the American people support Head Start. Rarely, if ever, has a program enjoyed such broad-based support.

Today we are here to look at different Head Start models throughout the state of Texas. We will examine how they have successfully helped low-income children and families through comprehensive services, parental involvement in program decisions in their child's education and development, and community involvement and partnerships.

Hidalgo County Commissioners Court and the parent policy council have recently chosen a new executive director, Santiago Alaniz, and I applaud them for taking this action. This decision-making process has allowed both parents and community partners to come to an agreement on the best director for the program.

Now it is time to focus on maximizing the benefits of the program. Our children are entitled to the best comprehensive services, quality programs, well-trained teachers, and a learning environment that insures school readiness.

It is an honor for me to represent South Texas and the Rio Grande Valley. I am very pleased to be able to participate in this public hearing on Head Start programs, and I would like to return the program to the chairman of our subcommittee, Chairman Frank Riggs.

Chairman **Riggs**. Thank you, Congressman Hinojosa, and thank you for your kind comments. I think you have done a good job of setting the stage and are striking just the right tone for our hearing today, and at this point, I would like to recognize our friend and colleague, the ranking member of the subcommittee, Congressman Martinez, for his opening statement, if he chooses to make one.

Mr. **Martinez**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Let me start out by saying, I want to express my gratitude to you, Mr. Chairman, for convening this hearing and providing Congressman Hinojosa with the opportunity to organize, what I believe will be a very engaging and informational discussion.

And I want to say at the offset that it was extremely difficult for Mr. Riggs to be here today because his mother is quite ill, and it was an extreme sacrifice for him to come all this way to be with us. I want him to know that our prayers go out to her, and I hope that she will be better soon.

I want to, of course, thank Congressman Hinojosa for the invitation, and I think that he should truly be commended for all the efforts that he has put forth in bringing this hearing about. His strong leadership in the area and his commitment to the children and families of his community and the nation is evidenced by his tireless work to help strengthen the Head Start program here in McAllen.

Head Start, to me, is one of the most effective early intervention efforts that the federal government has invested its money in up to this present day. Nationwide, countless numbers of low-income children and families benefit from Head Start's comprehensive system of services.

Just today I met a lady whose daughter just graduated from Harvard and in her first year of employment is going to work for a federal judge. It is another example of the fine work that Head Start does.

As for my colleagues, they know that the 1994 authorization process was a comprehensive and critical evaluation of the program. The changes that we made to improve the accountability and the quality of our Head Start programs were something that both the Republicans and the Democrats worked on.

And I want to assure the mayor at this point in time that Mr. Riggs, when it comes to the future of our children, is very nonpartisan and has shown that throughout the bills that we have passed thus far.

I believe that we put in place back in 1994 an effective and locally driven and inspired program that has shown its beneficial effects both through research and millions of satisfied parents and families. That does

not mean that in isolated instances individual Head Start programs do not need assistance to improve quality and become models of excellence. That is one of the reasons that we are here this morning.

In fact, I believe that Head Start can achieve even greater success. I have introduced legislation which I hope the chairman will look at favorably to improve the reauthorization. This bill the Human Services Amendments of 1998, reauthorizes the Head Start Act and seeks to insure it addresses critical issues that we face today.

Given the avalanche of research on the importance of brain development in the very youngest children, my legislation would increase the set aside for Early Head Start from its present level of 5 percent to 10 percent. Intervening in the very early years of a child's life can prevent so many of the problems that we associate with poverty malnutrition, disability, and beyond. Early Head Start has met this charge and now must be expanded so that we can help a greater number of disadvantaged youngsters.

In addition to the bill's focus on the youngest of our children, it would strengthen the coordination and partnership between Head Start programs and local education agencies, something that I know that Mr. Riggs is very much in favor of.

This will help insure that the progress that the children achieve in Head Start will be sustained throughout their years in school and, ultimately, throughout their adult lives. It is my understanding that the witnesses on the second panel will share with us the benefits that they have seen of linking Head Start with the K-through-12 education system.

In closing, I would like to reiterate my appreciation to Congressman Riggs for convening this hearing, and my thanks to Congressman Hinojosa for providing the Members the opportunity to learn how Head Start works in these communities that he represents. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman **Riggs**. Thank you, Congressman Martinez. And again, ladies and gentlemen, welcome and thank you for your attendance and your participation here today. I don't know if anybody noticed, I promise you we did not compare notes or coordinate plans ahead of time, but both Congressman Martinez and I are wearing Save the Children ties. We don't know what is wrong with Ruben this morning. Just kidding.

But I hope that obviously strikes the right bipartisan note for the hearing today. In fact, my tie was given to me by my mom, and I appreciate Congressman Martinez's kind words.

It is a Save the Children tie, and these are fingerprints that was made by a little girl by the name of Ariana, age 12. I can relate to that, Our youngest is Sarah Ann Riggs, who is 11 going on 21. And the same goes, it is just like fingerprints, every child is different. And I think that also is probably a pretty good guiding philosophy for our consideration and deliberations on the reauthorization of Head Start.

I want to recognize and salute our former colleague, the former chairman of the House of Agriculture Committee and Congressman Hinojosa's predecessor, Congressman de la Garza, for being here today. We appreciate his interest and his involvement and solicit his advice and his input as we go about the reauthorization.

Mr. Chairman, I don't know if you know or not, but we are also kind of moving on parallel tracts to reauthorize the WIC program, children's program, and have now moved the bill out of our committee, which is now pending consideration on the Floor of the House when we return from this July 4th district work period or congressional recess.

We really want to thank our local elected officials, the county judge and the mayor, for being with us today, sitting with us. Gentlemen, I know you have pressing schedules, so feel free to stay as long as you would like, but we understand if you have to leave.

And Mr. Mayor, let me assure you that I share the philosophy of leaving partisan politics at the schoolhouse door. And, in fact, I think those are sentiments that President Clinton has mentioned repeatedly. In fact, I have heard him utter those very words in his last two State of the Union addresses to the joint session of Congress and to the country.

Our goal is to introduce a reauthorization bill soon after we reconvene. And as I mentioned, Congress is in recess now for a district work period. We will reconvene a week from today in Washington for votes. I would hope that soon after reconvening we could actually introduce a bill that would then be marked up or reported out at the full committee level and sent to the House floor.

In what is kind of a reversal of the normal process, the Senate is actually a little bit ahead of the House of Representatives. They have already approved a bill through committee that would expand early Head Start funding, built on the 1994 reauthorization, by requiring new standards to insure that children are ready for school, improve literacy training for children and for parents, and improve teaching and access for the disabled, and require assessments of individual programs.

It would also step up efforts to help children make the transition from Head Start to kindergarten, in order to try to address and to minimize the so-called fade-out effect in which educational gains diminish after two or three years in elementary school.

So, in other words, how do we sustain that even start, Mr. Mayor, that we want to give to our children, particularly, the most disadvantaged children in society. This program, as my colleagues have pointed out, has traditionally enjoyed broad bipartisan support in the Congress.

In just the last few years, Congress and the White House, and you know we are now, of course, living in the era of divided government where one party controls the White House, the other party controls the

Congress, and we have had at times some very contentious policy debates and frank disagreements, if you will pardon the pun.

But on this subject, there has been continued bipartisan support back in Washington. In fact, Congress has approved and the President has signed funding bills that have increased spending for Head Start from \$2.2 billion dollars in fiscal 1992 to \$4.4 billion dollars today, fiscal year 1998.

The President's goal is to enroll one million children in Head Start by the year 2002 a pretty good way, I might add, to start the new millennium and to double the Early Head Start program which serves infants and toddlers to 80,000.

And as an advocate of universal early childhood education, I support those goals, and I do that from a physically conservative standpoint, which leads me to believe that this is money well spent, that by spending on early childhood education and development we are attempting to get the most bang for that precious taxpayer buck.

So we have a lot of details that still have to be worked out. Improvement and expansion of the Head Start program is my primary goal. Now, we are going to be guided by several principles in this authorization, which I hope our witnesses today can speak to in their testimony. We want to strengthen Head Start's education and professional development components.

There is an ongoing debate in the Congress between quality versus quantity. I don't think that they are mutually exclusive, but I will say that there has to be at least as much emphasis given to improving the quality of Head Start as to expanding the program's services to include more young people and their parents.

We want to increase collaboration between Head Start and state welfare reform efforts. This is critically important, and it is beginning to change the face of Head Start, the way Head Start looks. Head Start now typically operates only part time serving primarily four year olds, as all of you who are program operators or have personal involvement and familiarity with the program know.

But as more women enter the labor force, which is a process being accelerated across America today by welfare reform and the implementation of tough welfare laws on a state-wide, state basis there is a push underway to pair Head Start with other programs to provide full-time care, and with new research showing the importance of early childhood brain development, we also want to expand services to infants and toddlers.

So Head Start is going to change as more and more women are working, and the mechanics are going to change, but we hope that the original philosophy with respect to the families and underprivileged children will remain the same.

The last goal is to establish more accountability for Head Start, especially at the local level. We want to

hold Head Start program operators accountable for proven results. Head Start now serves an estimated 830 children. It is by far the largest federal preschool or early childhood program.

I believe we have to insure that education services provided by Head Start reflect this current research on early childhood development, research that indicates that three and four year olds have very curious and fertile brains, and that we should be sowing the seeds of knowledge that will bloom into academic success later.

An excellent example of that kind of research and I highly recommend it is the National Research Council's recent report, Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children. That report specifically identifies developmental and cognitive accomplishments that are essential steps in preparing preschool children to learn how to read.

Everyone agrees that Head Start has many beneficial components, including parental involvement, preventive health services, and linkages to the community. However, and I can't stress this point too strongly. If you remember only one thing about my opening remarks, it is we should never lose sight of the fact that the primary goal of Head Start is to develop school readiness skills in young children.

In fact, I happened to see an article, one of the staff was nice enough to give me a packet. It is dealing a little bit with some of the controversy that has occurred here locally in McAllen. In bold is an excerpt that says, "In Hidalgo County, Head Start gets about 14 million annually of federal dollars to help poor preschool children prepare for grade school. The children are given meals, taught proper hygiene, and learn socialization skills."

It doesn't say anything about school readiness or the academic component of Head Start, which is, again, as far as I am concerned, the most essential element of Head Start.

Children participating in a Head Start program should start school as prepared, if not better prepared than their peers. In short, Head Start should insure a successful transition to kindergarten. It should insure that a child enters the public schools ready able to learn.

Another key theme of reauthorization will be evaluating and anticipating the impact of welfare reform, as I said. And it is something that is incorporated into the Senate version of the Head Start reauthorization.

How is Head Start adapting in this age of welfare reform? I would like to know today how it is adapting here in McAllen, in Hidalgo County, in the state of Texas as Texas implements welfare reform.

Head Start has traditionally been a part-day school-year program. In recent years, more Head Start programs have been adding a full-day full-year model to their services, but reports indicate that Head Start is still woefully behind in serving the needs of working families.

The data collected by the Head Start Bureau reveals that about 40.1 percent of all Head Start enrollees

were in need of full-day full-year child care. Yet, less than 10 percent actually received full-day full-year care through either their Head Start program or through a cooperative or what, I guess, the term being used these days is a wrap-around child care arrangement.

Although Head Start has gradually increased the number of full-day full-year slots, literally hundreds of thousands of Head Start families may be in need of quality full-time child care. We have to look at how to accelerate the creation of more full-day full-year slots to better serve the growing number of working families in need of such support.

So I think you have got to look at, if you will, a broad overview of where we are and some of the needs, important, even critical issues that we are looking at in the context of the reauthorization.

And again, I want to thank Congressman Hinojosa and the other members of our panel today for welcoming us here to McAllen. And I very much look forward to the testimony from our witnesses today. I know their experience and their knowledge from first-hand involvement here locally with the program will provide us with valuable input on the reauthorization of Head Start.

So with that, I am going to call forward our first panel of witnesses. And as they are seated, I am going to recognize Congressman Hinojosa to introduce each of our witnesses. I will tell the audience that we have gone a little bit longer than we normally do at the beginning of a hearing because of the unusual circumstances. We are here conducting a field hearing in McAllen, not back in Washington.

I will stress to our witnesses that they should be as brief as possible in their testimony to allow us more opportunity for interaction, because I think the members find the questions and answers, the give and take to be as important, if not more important than the written testimony.

And I will assure you that your entire statement will appear in the record, and that record will be available to all interested members of Congress and their staffs.

Congressman Hinojosa.

Mr. Hinojosa. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the benefit of the audience, we would like to say that prepared statements have been given to the congressmen, and we have read the material before coming to the hearing.

We are asking the presenters to avoid reading the entire text of the presentation you have prepared. You can refer to it, certainly, at any time, but let it come from the heart. You know what you wrote, and you know the material very well.

Each one of you represents an important component of this public hearing, and we want you to feel very comfortable. If you can speak to us and inform us as best as you can so that we can take this information from this field hearing and utilize it in the reauthorization of this program when we get back to Washington.

I would like to first introduce the first presenter. Ms. Lillian Quintanilla is chair of the Head Start Policy Council. She has two children enrolled in the Hidalgo County Head Start program and will share her observations with regard to the importance of parental involvement in the program.

The second presenter will be Ms. Irma Pena, Director of Hidalgo County's Head Start Family Services Department. She served as the interim executive director of Hidalgo County Head Start from 1995 through 1997 and has been with the program since its inception in 1981. She will reflect on her tenure as director.

The third and final presenter of the first panel will be Dr. Miguel de los Santos. He is department chair of the School Administration and Supervision at the University of Texas-Pan American. Dr. de los Santos holds a Ph.D in educational administration and is the former interim director of Hidalgo County Head Start. He will discuss governance and organizational issues he faced as the interim director.

And with that, Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask Ms. Quintanilla if she would begin her presentation.

STATEMENT OF LILLIAN QUINTANILLA, CHAIRPERSON, HIDALGO COUNTY HEAD START POLICY COUNCIL, WESLCO, TEXAS

Ms. **Quintanilla**. My name is Lillian Quintanilla. I am a parent in the Hidalgo Head Start program. Thank you for allowing me to testify before the subcommittee on behalf of the Hidalgo County Head Start program.

Chairman **Riggs**. Ms. Quintanilla, let me interrupt you for just a second. Can you hear her in the back? Could you move the microphone closer to you and speak directly into it.

That is much better. You need to turn the microphone just slightly so you are speaking directly into it.

Mr. **Hinojosa**. Would you begin once again, please.

Ms. **Quintanilla**. Okay. My name is Lillian Quintanilla. I am a parent in the Hidalgo County Head Start program. Thank you for allowing me to testify before this subcommittee on behalf of the Hidalgo County Head Start program.

I am a mother to three lovely children, ages four, five, and one. I can attest to the benefits that Head Start has to offer. Unfortunately, unlike my child, I did not have the opportunity to receive a head start in life.

I know for a fact that if I had attended a program like Head Start, I would not have stopped with a high school diploma. As a policy council member, I wanted to make a difference in the council and help in bringing the council together to start making decisions as a team and learn the process of agreeing and disagreeing and still remain one board and to never lose the vision and the purpose of Head Start and the policy council, which is to always remember the children do come first.

I always wanted to put in place additional training for parents and policy council members to give them more knowledge and a better understanding of what the program is about. Head Start has increased my self-esteem and my confidence to the point of where conducting public meetings and talking about issues have become second nature and make me realize that I want to continue my education.

This coming fall I plan to enroll at South Texas Community College and continue my education, knowing that it will be hard, but I am not afraid anymore. I know that I can do it, because Head Start has made me determined and aware that I have what it takes to accomplish a better future for me and my family.

This year the Hidalgo County Head Start program has broken new ground. In Hidalgo County, the Hidalgo County Commissioners Court, the grantee board, and the Hidalgo County policy council have joined together to share in the decision-making for the good of the program.

As a policy council member, I am very glad that now there is a governing body and not a governing person and that the team-building training that Head Start has taught me has proven useful during these difficult times.

We, the policy council and the Commissioners Court together, have chosen a new leader for Head Start, and I feel confident because of the difficulties we have experienced and surpassed, we will emerge with an even stronger program, and I am very confident in our new director, and I feel that giving him enough time, we will become one of the best programs in Texas.

As parents, we demand that funding for Head Start not only continue but that it be increased to provide quality services to the unfortunate children and families that still remain unserved in Hidalgo County.

The parents, staff, and community support, and dedication to the program is evident here today by our testimony, and we want you elected officials to know that the children of Hidalgo County do come first.

This is just something I thought of last night because I went to the Island for the Fourth of July, and I kept on hearing the words while we were seeing the fireworks display of President John F. Kennedy. They kept on repeating them. "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country."

And I feel as a citizen of this country, I am asking you to help the children, our children, and offer them a Head Start in education that they so desperately need, because they are our future.

Thank you for allowing me this time, and thank you for your undivided attention, and if you have any questions, feel free to ask.

Mr. **Hinojosa**. Thank you, Ms. Chairman. Lillian, as chair of the parents council, you speak for lots of parents, and so you are very special. We appreciate your statements, and we thank you for the work that you do as a volunteer.

If I may, I would like to ask you, since 1996 when we had the Welfare Reform Act pass through Congress, some vast changes are occurring in this region. Can you explain the impact of that welfare reform on your program?

Ms. **Quintanilla**. I feel that there is even a greater need now for the Head Start program, because a lot of people have been taken off, you know, off welfare because they don't have their citizenship, or even those parents who are getting part-time jobs and are going into the workforce need a safe educational, they offer nutritious meals to leave their children and feel safe that they have a place safe to leave them and that they are going to learn and that they are going to have everything that they need so that they are comfortable with going to work.

And I have to say that for those who have been taken off or because of welfare reform, or because of their citizenships that they don't have, Head Start has citizenship classes. So I think the need kind of is even greater now.

I feel it has affected our program tremendously, because we kind of take that place and help those parents go into the workforce.

And child care is very, very expensive these days. So I really think that it has impacted our program a whole lot, and I think that is one of the reasons why we need to keep on funding the program, because the need is there, and it is even greater now because of the welfare reform.

Chairman **Riggs**. Mr. Hinojosa, if you don't mind, what I would like to do is have the other two witnesses give their testimony, and then we will all three have an opportunity to ask questions of all three witness.

Mr. **Hinojosa**. That will be fine.

Chairman **Riggs**. It will flow a little bit better. Did you want to reintroduce Ms. Pena or recognize her for her testimony?

Mr. **Hinojosa**. Yes. Ms. Irma Pena was the acting interim executive director from 1995 to 1997, and hopefully you can help us with the overview of the program not only during the period that you served as the interim director, but also in the 18 years that you have been with the program. If you care to refer to your statement, please do so.

See Appendix A for the Written Statement of Ms. Lillian Quintanilla

STATEMENT OF MS. IRMA PENA, FORMER INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, HIDALGO COUNTY HEAD START PROGRAM, EDINBURG, TEXAS

Ms. **Pena**. Good morning. First of all, I want to take an opportunity to thank all of you, particularly Congressman Hinojosa for your gracious invitation to allow me to testify here today, and also to welcome Congressman Riggs and Congressman Martinez to our very cool climate.

Chairman **Riggs**. I wasn't going to comment on that.

Ms. **Pena**. But certainly, we want to welcome you to our beautiful county, in particular, the city of McAllen. First of all, I do want to advise you that I feel honored to be able to testify in front of the hearing this morning.

Especially, I am very proud of Ms. Quintanilla. She is a parent, and there are many parents in the audience at this point in time, and it took a lot of guts, initiative, and fortitude for her to come forward and speak from her heart. And I know that she has done an excellent job, and she has got so much potential as many of our Head Start parents do, and I want to thank her.

I want to give you a little bit of the history of the Hidalgo County Head Start program. First, the Head Start program has been funded since 1965, but to date, it has served over 15 million children throughout the nation.

Here in the county since its inception, it has served over 50,000 children. The impact that it has given to our families throughout the county has been tremendous, particularly, in the fact that currently, most of our families, I believe it is close to 60 percent are under a \$12,000-a-year income. And this is important to know.

When the program was funded in 1982 to Hidalgo County, when it became its grantee, it had a budget of \$2,532,835 to serve 1,080 children. Currently, the program is serving 2,580 children with a budget of \$11,891,393 with an additional \$2,193,731 of local contributions.

Head Start is based on the premise that all children do share certain needs. And with this in mind, I would like to go into what Head Start philosophy is, particularly here within Hidalgo County.

It does rest on four basic principles, the first being a child can benefit most from a comprehensive disciplinary program to foster normal development and remedy problems. Secondly, parents are the primary educators of their children and must be directly involved with the program, and it is evident here.

Thirdly, the well-being of children is inextricably linked to the well-being of the entire family. And lastly, the partnerships with other agencies and organizations in the community are essential to meeting family needs.

The program concentrates its areas in three content areas, being early childhood development and health services, family and community partnerships, and program designing management. I would like to explore each area briefly, if I may.

In the area of early childhood development and health services, currently we do offer three different programs: A part-day program from 7:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.; a full-day program, 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.; and an extended-day program, which is from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. To meet the needs of our working families.

Each classroom is staffed with a teacher, a teacher assistant, parent volunteers, and a disability services aide when necessary. We are currently providing services, again, to 2,580 children with 10 percent of our enrollment being specifically geared for children with disabilities.

One of our highest points within the educational curriculum and the practices that go on in the Head Start classroom is geared towards developmentally appropriate practices. The curriculums that we are currently using, particularly a core curriculum, was developed jointly with the Hidalgo County Head Start staff and also the Region One Education Service Center, which is utilizing this curriculum not only within the Head Start programs, but also many of our school districts. So it is complementing what is taking place in the school district.

One of our biggest success stories has been our adult literacy program. We realize that successful children will come from successful parents, just like Ms. Quintanilla. We encourage advancement in education for our parents, and with that in mind, we had over 1,500 parents this past year participating in our literacy program, and we have had a very high success rate. Last year we had 150 parents acquire their GED. This is a big accomplishment for this program.

Within the health care services, part of the goal is to insure that every child and family will receive preventive health care and empower families the basic health knowledge of medical resources within the community.

In the health services entity, all Head Start children are provided with a full physical exam, also dental exams and follow-ups, and the linking of families to insure them of getting family health insurance through collaboration with, for example, of course, qualifying children through Medicaid, if we have children that are Medicaid recipients, the WIC program, the Hidalgo County Health Care Department, the Hidalgo County Indigent Services, the Clinica in Hidalgo, etc.

One of the big issues in regards to health services and services to children with disabilities is that we utilize our Head Start dollars as being the last resource. This is where the collaboration of agencies do come into play, and we feel very fortunate that we have a very strong alliance with our communities, but also with the county itself. And this is where the impact has made a major difference within our families.

In the area of nutrition, there is over 12,500 meals that are prepared daily through three of our central kitchens. And I will talk a little bit later on about some of the statistics that are some of the facts that we have provided for you.

In the area of mental health, the program is supported by a psychologist, licensed clinical social workers, and several MSWs. We provide crisis intervention, follow-up parenting classes, child observation and feedback to teachers and parents, play therapy, etc.

In the area of family and community partnerships, it is our goal that with parents and community resources that we establish mutual trust, identify family goals and strengths, and assist families to obtain

self-sufficiency. This is a major issue for us. If I recall, I believe it was Congressman Riggs that talked about educating our parents and staff development.

One of the things that I do want to advise you is that nationwide, 30 percent of the staff are former parents or are current or former Head Start parents. And within Hidalgo County, we have got 49 percent of our staff that are current or former Head Start parents. This is a major factor.

Nationwide there is over 1,200,000 parents volunteering in their local programs. And within our Head Start program, this past school year we had 2,886 parent volunteers within our Head Start classrooms and in our program.

In the area of program management and governance, it has accomplished the shared responsibilities of the Commissioners Court, which is the grantee board, and the Head Start policy council. In order to oversee the delivery of high quality services to children and families in accordance to Head Start legislation, it is with their efforts that we must empower our parents to become actively participating in the shared decision-making process, and this has been happening within Hidalgo County Head Start.

The Hidalgo County policy council and the grantee board, again, broke new ground this year while working together in an atmosphere of camaraderie in jointly appointing a permanent director for this program.

Earlier, during the year, the Hidalgo County Commissioners Court presented a joint resolution restoring them to play a more active role in the decision-making process of the Head Start program. This action will allow for the program to become more productive in bringing different funding sources together for the benefit of Hidalgo County.

Additionally, it will strengthen the delivery of services to the community. As a staff member for the past 18 years and one of the only panelist for today that is a current staff member of Hidalgo County Head Start program, I can tell you from personal experience that I have seen the impact to families and also to communities that this program plays.

I want to implore you to not only reauthorize funding, but also to give additional funding, not only to Hidalgo County, but to all Head Start programs. It is very fundamental for the children of this nation. Thank you.

Chairman **Riggs**. Thank you, Ms. Pena. Let me just ask very quickly, is there a waiting list for...

Ms. **Pena**. Certainly.

Chairman **Riggs**. ...for Head Start families here in Hidalgo County?

Ms. **Pena**. Yes. In many of our communities, particularly, as an example, in Edinburg, I believe we have got services for about, let me go more specifically here to McAllen, because we are here in the community of McAllen.

Here in McAllen, we do serve 350 children, and currently, we have got over 300 children on the waiting list.

Chairman **Riggs**. And do you know that those 300 children on the waiting list would be eligible?

Ms. **Pena**. Yes. These are income-eligible families. As a matter of fact, we do rank them according to income eligibility, of course, by priority based on working status and so forth, and again, encouraging education.

In fact we have right now here in McAllen one of the first to have a Head Start program within the South Texas Community College, and we are very proud of this program because, again, this is a collaboration with the community college, but with the Hidalgo County Head Start program, we provide services to their student population that is income eligible in surrounding areas or surrounding neighborhoods.

And we are about to enter an agreement with the University of Texas-Pan American to do basically the same thing in utilizing these schools as being lab schools for those early childhood development programs.

See Appendix B for the Written Statement of Ms. Pena

Chairman **Riggs**. Good. Congressman Hinojosa.

Mr. **Hinojosa**. I would like to move forward with the next presenter, Dr. Miguel de los Santos, a friend of the community and the region and certainly one who has been a very strong spokesman in the education community, and we welcome you, Dr. de los Santos.

DR. MIGUEL DE LOS SANTOS, DEPARTMENT CHAIR, SCHOOL OF ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISION, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS PAN-AMERICAN, EDINBURG, TEXAS

Dr. de los Santos. Thank you, Congressman. With your permission, what I would like to do is read a shortened draft in the essence of time, because when I get away from my context, I can talk all day, and I am going to try to keep it to about five or six minutes. My students will testify to that.

Chairman **Riggs**, Congressman Hinojosa, and Congressman Martinez, good morning, and thank you very much for the opportunity and for being in South Texas this morning. I am one that is honored by your presence and am hopeful that the result of the hearings will be your continued and expanded support for our young children and families in Hidalgo County and throughout the country.

My name is Miguel de los Santos, and although I am currently the chair of the Educational Leadership Department at the University of Texas-Pan American, I am before you today simply as a citizen and a 32-year veteran educator of socioeconomically disadvantaged youth throughout the state of Texas.

In 1996-97, I had occasion to serve as a policy council member as interim program director for the Hidalgo County Head Start program. From that experience I have drawn some conclusions and formulated a number of recommendations that I believe will make a good program better.

One such conclusion regards the urgency for this committee and our national leadership as a whole to commit to continuing an aggressive advocacy for the health, education, social, and parental needs of the most socioeconomically disadvantaged population of young children in our country.

This must be demonstrated through increased funding to serve more children and through adjustments and modifications to current rules and regulations which currently govern Head Start programs.

Head Start policy manual 70.2, the parents, was issued on August 10th, 1970, and reprinted in 1992, and it states, quote, "If Head Start children are to reach their fullest potential, there must be an opportunity for Head Start parents to influence the character of programs affecting the development of their children," end quote.

The author should be commended and thanked. All of the recent research on parental involvement in the public schools indicates that children of parents who are involved are generally more successful in school both academically and socially.

If success is the result, who could argue against increased parental participation in programs that directly affect their children. The manual also specifies the exact functions and degrees of responsibility for governance or administration for the parent policy council, as well as the program director, the grantee agency or delegate agency, and the executive director.

On November 5th, 1996, in the federal registrar was printed, "The final rule for Head Start program performance standards," and it describes program governance exactly as a 1970s version of manual 70.2. I liberally quote from 70.2 the final rule only to establish that the issue of mandated training for parents and community representatives as members of policy council is critical.

We hold councils responsible for the functions of planning, general administration, personnel administration, grant application process, and evaluation. Yet, formal training in these areas is clearly absent from both the 1970 and '96 versions of the manual.

In Hidalgo County alone, the policy council is expected to oversee a budget in excess of \$13 million dollars to serve nearly 3,000 children through the efforts of several hundred employees. This monumental task is expected with no requirement for formal training.

Staff development training is a systematic process utilized by school districts to improve or influence professional knowledge, practices, skills, beliefs, attitudes, and understanding of a program or personnel.

In Texas, the Texas Education Code governs the training and orientation of more than 7,000 school board members in more than 1,000 school districts, and the law simply states that the board of education shall provide state board of education shall provide training, 20 hours minimum, the first year for independent school district trustees, and that a trustee must complete any training required by a state board of education.

I strongly recommend that this committee cause the inclusion in the final rule or in the new law of a strict requirement for training of both parent and community representatives who will serve on parent policy councils of Head Start programs across the nation. It is only fair and prudent that they be fully prepared to execute their duties equipped with further knowledge and expertise.

I recommend that a minimum of 20 hours of training be completed before any decision-making by a new council transpires. Additionally, the council should undergo continued inservice development activities throughout their tenure. This type of required training would improve the quality of decision-making by all policy councils.

Further, as with Texas school boards, policy council members who have not received training in specific areas should not be allowed to participate in decision-making in those areas. As an example, school boards in Texas must receive training before they evaluate their superintendents. This I use as an example, that evaluations be done by policy council members who have specifically trained in the evaluation, for example, of a Head Start director. There are many other examples.

Governance problems generally occur as a result of philosophical or political differences among members of a policy council. One major concern, which I personally experienced as program director whose major responsibility is the day-to-day operation of the program, was with regard to the 51-percent majority rule.

The rule states that 51 percent of the policy council must be parents, and in the case of Hidalgo County Head Start, the local bylaws dictate that a quorum for a meeting shall be comprised of no less than 51 percent of the total policy council's membership, and of that quorum, at least 51 percent must be parent members of the policy council.

Simply because of the philosophical, political, or whatever reasons, a parent group can, in fact, immobilize business by simply boycotting legal meetings, and this can jeopardize the business of serving children. I do not believe this was the intent or ever will be the intent of Congress or of DHHS.

Persons who serve as community representatives are also highly committed, dedicated, and experienced individuals who seek to work with parents and community for the well-being of the young children and families. The program's success, after all, will reflect the future success of respective communities.

I recommend that the issue of balancing power among parents and community representatives be addressed. I also recommend that the local policies, which may even remotely, negatively affect the program, be modified by order of the Department of Health and Human Services, or, if not modified by the local program's, be disallowed by DHHS.

I also firmly believe that DHHS will better serve local programs by stepping in assertively and administering a program which may be experiencing major governance or programmatic problems.

Every effort should be given to a local agency to work out their own problems. However at any time that a program seems to be at risk of failure, DHHS would consider the expedient assignment of a program monitor or master to insure that that program services to children and families continues smoothly while the problems are resolved.

The monitor or master's decision supersede even the policy council. It is not uncommon to see the Texas Education Agency enforce this process on Texas school districts which experience major governance problems.

Simply, the integrity of Head Start and the education of the children should never be compromised due to quarreling adults. If a governance problem persists for more than a couple of months, DHHS should take

over until the governance problems are resolved. This type of intervention will accelerate the resolution of local problems. Simply, none of us wants an outsider running our household.

Finally, the Hidalgo County Head Start program is very much interested in increasing the participation of four and five year olds and expanding the program to serve children ages zero to three. However the identification of facilities to rent is somewhat difficult in smaller communities.

Offers by DHHS for expansion of program should include funds for buildings, as well as for maintenance and operations. This would increase the applications for funding and increase the capital assets of local programs which are likely to be serving young children in Texas and across the country for decades to come.

In conclusion, I thank you for the opportunity to testify. I thank you for listening and for giving your consideration to the issues that I have raised for the continued improvement of Head Start in Hidalgo County in Texas and throughout the United States.

See Appendix C for the Written Statement of Dr. de los Santos

Chairman **Riggs**. Thank you, Dr. de los Santos. And let me just say, we now sort of segue to the question-and-answer phase of this first panel before calling to order our second panel of witnesses.

I am going to ask just a couple of very brief questions and then turn to my colleague Congressman Hinojosa for his questions and then Congressman Martinez and then back to me. And then we will see if we want to go around again.

The normal procedure would be that I would ask questions first and then recognize the ranking member, but again, because we are in Congressman Hinojosa's district, we want to accord him that particular courtesy, and hopefully, he will kind of guide our questions as well.

The very first thing I want to ask Ms. Quintanilla is, do you agree with Dr. de los Santos' recommendations that there be some sort of mandatory training for policy council members?

Ms. **Quintanilla**. Yes, definitely. I think that what he said is true. In fact, this year the parent policy council amended our bylaws.

We used to serve from September 1st to August 31st. We changed that and are serving now from, they changed it this year, from October 15th to October 14th, reason being that we thought changing that will give the parents more time to be trained before they actually serve on the board, because it was done really quick.

Within a week or two weeks you had your center meeting. You pick your center committee, then that following weekend you pick your policy council member, then a week later you are on the policy council and you are making decisions that you know nothing about.

And I think that we need to be more informed of what the program is about. We need to do more training. And we have done something, but I know that there is more to do.

Chairman **Riggs**. There is a need for more formal in-depth training.

Ms. **Quintanilla**. Right.

Chairman **Riggs**. What kind of training did you receive when you agreed to volunteer as a policy council member with respect to your governance responsibilities?

Ms. **Quintanilla**. We had someone come down from Texas Tech. He kind of went over our performance standards. We had a briefing from each component director letting us know about that component. It was done in a weekend.

But we still need more training. I mean, what do I know about a budget? You know, I see these numbers. It is like, "Okay. If you say this is the way it's supposed to be," I really think we need more training on the budget, what the numbers are supposed to look like.

There is a great need for more training. I feel that the whole point of having parents involved was not to be educated, but and to just be involved in what is happening with your children, to get the parents in there.

But then, times have changed. Things have changed. The program has grown a whole lot. The amount of money that the program is getting is different than what it had started out with way back when, 1965 or 1980.

So I think that has a reason. I don't think it was meant to be that way. I don't think it was meant for us to be educated and stuff like that. And I am not saying that we do need to be educated. I am just saying that training would help.

Chairman **Riggs**. I want to give you the opportunity to recognize any of your fellow policy council members who might be in attendance at today's hearing. I don't know if you would like to introduce them, or if there are other policy council members present, whether we could just ask them to stand and be recognized. Are any other policy council members present?

Ms. **Quintanilla**. I do see one in the back. She is a community representative. Her name is Lydia Silva, and I saw Elisa Munoz. She is in the back. She is also a community representative. And then we have Janie Guajardo, who is also a community representative.

Chairman **Riggs**. Very good. Ladies, thank you for being here today.

Ms. **Quintanilla**. Oh, we have another parent, Carmen Meza. She is in the back in the light green.

Chairman **Riggs**. So four other policy council members are here. Very good. Congressman Hinojosa.

Mr. **Hinojosa**. Thank you, Chairman Riggs. Lillian, other than additional funding and board member training, what federal assistance would help you achieve your desired results in the Hidalgo County Head Start program?

Ms. **Quintanilla**. Other than additional funding. Well, it all has to come from funding, but I think our literacy program, I think if there was some kind of, financial aid specifically for Head Start parents for them to continue their education or get an education, maybe some kind of scholarships for parents that want to go on with their education.

I don't know. Am I answering right? Am I in the right field? Is that what you are trying to talk about?

Mr. **Hinojosa**. If I understand your recommendation, you think that there should be opportunities for the parents of these children.

Ms. **Quintanilla**. To be more educated.

Mr. **Hinojosa**. And there are programs other than Head Start that would be available to help them possibly complete high school, if they did not finish, or if they did finish or have a GED and would like to go to the community college. We probably have the greatest opportunity since the GI bill, bigger and better than the GI bill, that is, student financial aid to go to South Texas Community College or to the University of Texas-Pan American.

And then, of course, there are other programs for job training now available. So what you are referring to is available, and we simply need to get some counselors to come and make that information available to all those parents and others whom you are referring to.

Ms. **Quintanilla**. Yes.

Mr. **Hinojosa**. But I was really referring to partnerships with the community. I think that I heard Irma say that there were about \$12 million dollars coming from the federal government and an additional \$2 million dollars from other sources.

I was hoping that you could expand, if you have discussed with your board members and others, as to what other sources that you could tap onto, human or financial resources, to achieve the result that you-all want in the program.

If you haven't, give that some thought. I don't want to put you in a situation that is difficult, but another question that I have, and this one is for Irma. How successful is our Hidalgo County Head Start program at using federal dollars to leverage local and private support in order to expand the existing program and serve the children and the families in Hidalgo County?

Ms. **Pena**. Well, as I described earlier, the \$2 million plus dollars of local support is indicative to what our local program is doing at this point in time. Much of the support that we receive currently is through the areas, particularly, for health services.

We have providers that will allow us In-kind services. We have consultants that do training for our staff at 0 rate, if you want to call it. Also our community businesses at large, we have several functions that take place throughout the year that is supported solely through that effort.

One of our projects is the Jack and Jill Closet. The Jack and Jill Closet is a clothing assistance program that provides clothing for the neediest of our children. We usually serve about 10 percent or more, depending on the year and the need, of course.

But that particular program is supplemented through fund-raising activities that take place throughout the year from our local center communities, and also donations from different community businesses.

Another project that we have been doing for, I believe, three years now is our Christmas Carnival, which is a project of actually providing a day at the carnival for all of our kids. And this is supported solely through donations by community organizations through endowments of anywhere from \$500 to \$100, etc., and that is full support of community.

Mr. **Hinojosa**. Thank you. I would like to ask Dr. de los Santos, he makes some very interesting points and very strong recommendations as we look at the reauthorization. I want to ask you a couple of questions on the program monitoring, and DHHS involvement.

We have had some concerns with our program here in Hidalgo County. At times we couldn't get a quorum among other kinds of problems and concerns over the last three years. Did DHHS step in when our program was in disarray and in the situation that you described?

Dr. **de los Santos**. Yes. At our request, DHHS stepped in when we asked them to come and visit with us in terms of a mediation type of procedure to try to help us work out our problems.

The program itself continues to be very successful. Fortunately, what happens, you know, when teachers close their classroom doors they get interested in the kids, and things are happening with kids all across Hidalgo County.

Fortunately, the differences that we had among ourselves, like I said, and my understanding is that there has been a lot of work on it this year and many things are being worked out.

But my statements were with reference to when a program was in the kind of situation that ours was a year ago, that there was so much confusion among ourselves, policy council members and I was in the middle of it, by the way. I am not pointing fingers at anyone else. Then I think an agency, such as DHHS, should come in and say, "You know, if you guys can't do it yourselves, we will do it for you. Get your act together, and then we will give it back to you."

And if I have a criticism of DHHS, it is that the policy council serves for one year, and one year passes by very quickly, and then you have a new policy council, and I don't think there is a year to spend on trying to get our act together. I feel like if we need outside pressure, we should have outside pressure.

Mr. Hinojosa. Lastly, Dr. de los Santos, you spoke about our looking at reauthorization and including mandatory training for our board members, and I agree with you. I am sure you are drawing on your experience as a school superintendent, and I can draw on the experiences of being a local school board member and a state board member, I know how helpful it has been to offer that kind of training to school board members who handle budgets of this size.

So I strongly agree with both of you, and we will address this in the reauthorization. And lastly, I think that we certainly need to address and study the proposal that you mentioned on the balance of power. I think that was very interesting, and we certainly are going to look into it with Frank with the assistance and leadership of Chairman Frank Riggs.

We thank you for a fine presentation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Riggs. Thank you. And before I recognize Congressman Martinez, may I just follow up on a question that you asked, because I want to make sure that we are very clear with respect to Dr. de los Santos' testimony here.

Are you testifying that you feel the federal government should have intervened earlier in the ongoing dispute or problems here with respect to the Hidalgo County Head Start program?

Dr. de los Santos. I am testifying that at a point when we called five or six meetings in a roll and we couldn't get a quorum to meet, and the business of children must go on, and we asked the federal government to come in and assist us, that they continued to say, "No. It is local control, local control, local control."

Chairman **Riggs**. Did you have to ask DHHS to intervene?

Dr. **de los Santos**. Yes, we did.

Chairman **Riggs**. And they did not initiate any contact with you? They were not aware of the problems?

Dr. **de los Santos**. They were aware. We kept them posted all along, but we had to ask them to come in and work with us for a mediation process.

Chairman **Riggs**. And this was during your tenure as the interim executive director?

Dr. **de los Santos**. Yes, sir, it was.

Chairman **Riggs**. Okay. Thank you. Congressman Martinez.

Mr. **Martinez**. Thank you. A couple of things. One is, when you suggest that the members of policy council only serve one year, is that the general situation that occurred here?

Let me explain why I am asking the question. It is because according to the regulations, a parent has to have a child enrolled in the program to be on the policy council. But in a lot of cases, that parent may have more than one child, and so that when one child graduated from Head Start, another child was coming in, and the parent could remain on that policy council.

Has it been a policy here to remove that person after they have served that year regardless if they have another child in the program?

Dr. **de los Santos**. No. I am glad you asked that question. There is some continuity with some parents

who are reelected. I believe it is three years that a parent can serve or a community representative can serve.

Mr. **Martinez**. Well, let me interrupt you for a minute. That was the next thing I was going to suggest, is that the rules allow for a parent to serve beyond the time that the child is in the program. Sometimes that is good. Sometimes it not, and I will get into that later. So there are reasons why you don't have to serve only one term.

Dr. **de los Santos**. I did not, I apologize if I came across saying that one term and it is over. There are many, many members who serve two years, up to three years.

Mr. **Martinez**. Yes. The reason I bring that up too is due to one of the other statements you made is in regard to the training.

When I was sitting in Mr. Riggs' place as chairman of the committee that had jurisdiction over Head Start, and last time we authorized the Act, we wanted both the Republicans and the Democrats on that committee to participate fully. One of the key people on that committee too at the time was Susan Molinari, who served on that committee with one goal in mind, to improve the quality of Head Start.

And almost everybody on that committee said, "If there is anything we do in this reauthorization, it must be to improve the quality of Head Start." It is hard to determine what is quality.

But we set certain things in place, and one of them was to make sure that the parents had the training that you talked about. And in the regulation it does say that the funding that is provided for quality is to provide training necessary to improve the qualifications of the staff of the Head Start agencies and to support the staff training, child counseling, and other services necessary to address the problems of the children, which include the training of the parents in our policy committee.

So training is in place. I don't know why it is that somehow or another, possibly the executive director, who should be primarily responsible for making sure that everybody that is involved in the program know all the things that are available from the Department of Health and Human Services, requires the Department of Health and Human Services to provide that assistance.

Because in many cases, you are unaware of something that is available to you in the program, so don't take advantage of it. And sure, they are not going to come forward and volunteer it, which I think they should, to make sure that you are running a good program.

The whole idea in the reauthorization was to try to improve the quality of the program. It does us no good to pass the law to do it, if, in fact, the agency that is charged with overseeing this is not going to carry it forward.

In that regard, I sympathize with you when you say that they knew you had problems and didn't step in. You are addressing in part of your testimony the need to balance the power. I think that is one of the very important things I have been trying to get across both in my conversation with Hinojosa and Chairman Frank Riggs. Because too many times literal interpretations of what the regulations say and what the law says give rise to the parent council believing they have the ultimate power over the grantee board. And that is not the way it was intended.

It was always intended that the parents should have a say in what happens to their children in the programs and how their programs are run, but never to give them veto power, like you say, by boycotting meetings or doing things like that, that just because they have a difference of opinion for whatever reason, philosophically or politically or whatever, they disrupt the operation, because it really affects the children.

So I think that is something we really do need to address how we are going to create that balance of power so the parents still have the say and yet be involved, as involved as we want them to be involved.

There is a good example here. The reason you involve them, is that in almost every case in the past years that I have been on the committee that oversees Head Start, at various hearings that I held, and that others held before I was the chairman, we had cases of people coming forward, like this young lady, realizing that now that her children were getting this help, they needed to get even more educated themselves to be able to help their children go on to be a success.

In LA there was a young lady who was a dropout of high school, who by the time she was testifying before us had seen her three children go through Head Start, and was finishing up her master's. It is tremendous incentive. So I think that we need to do something about that.

There was one other statement that you made Ms. Quintanilla did I come close?

Ms. **Quintanilla.** Quintanilla.

Mr. **Martinez.** Quintanilla? When you say you are glad that there is a governing body now rather than a governing person, what did you mean by that?

Ms. **Quintanilla.** Well, just like Ms. Pena stated, there was a joint resolution with the Commissioners

Court. Now the whole Commissioners Court is the grantee board.

Prior to that, the funding was given to the grantee board, which was Commissioners Court, but they had one person oversee it, which was the executive director, the county judge at that time.

The program director used to just have to go to the executive director, to the judge at that time, and it was just getting his approval.

Mr. **Martinez**. One individual.

Ms. **Quintanilla**. Yes. One individual. And he was the one that would recommend all community reps. He would recommend all five.

This year it was done differently. In fact, I have to give Judge Cuellar some credit because he gave the opportunity to the Commissioners to go ahead and recommend a community rep before this joint resolution had been passed.

So each Commissioner this year recommended a community rep, unlike before, it was the judge, the former judge recommending all five community representatives. So now they are overseeing the program as a board, the whole grantee. Now, in order to get approval for whatever, they now need to go to the Commissioners Court and get the approval of the Commissioners Court as a whole. Now the judge can't have a say by himself.

Mr. **Martinez**. Do the parents have a say in who that appointee is? Can they reject him?

Ms. **Quintanilla**. Yes. We have the right to approve or disapprove.

Mr. **Martinez**. Because that was never intended. It was always intended there should be an advisory board that worked in conjunction with the the policy council.

And that is the problem we have had. I will give you a very good example in my own district. There was a program that was funded by the super grantee, the Los Angeles County Board of Education. And the Los Angeles County Board of Education in many cases is reluctant to step in when there are problems

until they get too bad.

There was embezzlement in a local program. And the rectifying of that embezzlement situation then led to the controversy between the policy board and the board of directors of that particular program until finally the board of directors said, "You know, we don't have to apply for the grant from the LA Board of Education" and refused to accept the grant as a result of the Board of Education."

Now, they had to flounder around to find other agencies to take over programs in that community, because by law, the monies have to stay in that community. They can't be removed from that community, and the service must continue. So they then should leave it up to them. And here again, DHHS never stepped in while the Board of Education sat with their arms folded.

So I think that you are right, physician to the saints that is what your name says physician of the saints. Dr. de los Santos.

So you are absolutely right. I think there is something we need to do about that, because those kinds of things can happen.

Ms. **Quintanilla**. I can't speak for what happened prior to me being on the policy council on how things were done or why things were done the way they were. I don't know what happened. I was not around.

But I can tell you that as of this year, I can really see that the Commissioners Court is coming together. They are trying to get more involved, and they are trying to work with us. I am confident to saying that I think things are going to start getting better.

Mr. **Martinez**. Well, I am glad that you have got this problem straightened out to some degree, but I think that we still need to put something in place so that it can never happen again.

Ms. **Quintanilla**. Yes, I agree with you.

Mr. **Martinez**. Something that balances the powers, as you say, Doctor, a mechanism by which we won't wait until something of this catastrophic nature occurs before DHHS does its job, or any grantee does its job. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman **Riggs**. Thank you, Congressman Martinez. I am going to ask several questions of these witnesses, and I am going to ask for brief responses, because I would like to conclude this first panel by 10:30 a.m.

The first thing I would like to know, Ms. Quintanilla, do the parents help hire the teachers and help develop the curriculum?

Ms. **Quintanilla**. There is an advisory like subcommittee for the education components, right, Ms. Pena? And some former parents are on that committee or current parents are on that committee.

Chairman **Riggs**. All right. Let me go to Ms. Pena. Would you characterize the extent of the parents' involvement in hiring teachers or helping to develop curriculum?

Ms. **Pena**. Certainly. In reference to the hiring of teachers and hiring of all staff, actually, there is a subcommittee within the policy council, personnel committee, which will review all applicants, and they will make a recommendation to the policy council before hiring any staff members.

And, of course, being the fact that we do have a majority of our parents or a majority of our council members are parents, in the area of education and curriculum development we have an education advisory committee that is composed of different professionals in the area of education, but also parents from the different geographic areas that are involved in curriculum development and includes the curriculum that was developed in collaboration with Region I Education Service Center.

Chairman **Riggs**. Do you have any kind of program encouraging fathers to take a more active role?

Ms. **Pena**. We have a very large father participation. As a matter of fact, three of our council members, half of our parent representatives within our policy council are male. Okay?

Chairman **Riggs**. It is certainly okay by me.

Ms. **Pena**. And many of our, I don't have the specific figures, but I want to say that approximately about anywhere from 35 to 45 percent of our parent volunteers are male participants, along with becoming officers at the individual center committees.

We see that large amount of male-parent participation, particularly, when we do a leadership training for all center committee officers, and this is where the selection of the policy council members comes sometimes.

Chairman **Riggs**. I see. Now, here locally in Hidalgo County, in McAllen, is Head Start funding being commingled with any other federal funding to expand services especially for TANF beneficiaries, parents participating in the welfare or work fair program?

Ms. **Pena**. Well, we do have a collaboration project, but there is no commingling of funds.

Chairman **Riggs**. Okay. What about, do you get any funding from the federal day care...

Ms. **Pena**. No.

Chairman **Riggs**. ...block grant?

Ms. **Pena**. No.

Chairman **Riggs**. You do not?

Ms. **Pena**. No. Not the Hidalgo County Head Start program.

Chairman **Riggs**. Pardon?

Ms. **Pena**. Not the Hidalgo County Head Start program.

Chairman **Riggs**. Would that be some other entity that provides that kind of service locally?

Ms. **Pena**. Are you talking about child care management systems? Yes. Well, there are other entities, like, for example, Texas Migrant Council, that do handle the child care management systems funding.

Chairman **Riggs**. Let me tell you why I ask. It is a follow-up to what Congressman Hinojosa asked, and that is under the federal welfare reform law, we substantially increased taxpayer funding for child care.

We recognized that quality child care is one of the principal concerns, obviously, in the need the parent has in making that difficult transition from welfare to work. But if that funding is not coming down locally here, I am wondering if that funding is coordinated with Head Start, because it seems like a logical partnership.

Mr. **Hinojosa**. Will the Chairman yield?

Chairman **Riggs**. Of course.

Mr. **Hinojosa**. Chairman Riggs, as Irma pointed out, the Texas Migrant Council also runs another Head Start program with approximately 2,500 students. Their budget is about 84 million dollars, and they have much broader services that include day care services and many other services, too many to enumerate at this hearing.

But they also, of course, are helping here in the Rio Grande Valley. Getting back on one of the points that

you were trying to make about the staff and their training the teachers. How many of the folks who really teach, not aides, but the teachers. How many have bachelor's degrees?

Ms. **Pena**. None.

Ms. **Quintanilla**. None.

Mr. **Hinojosa**. How many have master's degrees?

Chairman **Riggs**. Well, did both the witnesses get a chance to respond? Did you both say none? Is that correct?

Ms. **Pena**. No. Currently we do not have any.

Mr. **Hinojosa**. How many have master's degrees?

Ms. **Quintanilla**. None.

Mr. **Hinojosa**. None? How many have associate degrees?

Ms. **Pena**. We have a number of our teaching staff currently with associate degrees.

Mr. **Hinojosa**. Would you say 10? 20?

Ms. Pena. I don't recall at this time. The majority of our, as a matter of a fact, all of our staff, in accordance with Head Start federal regulations, our teaching staff do have a child development associate credential, which is an initiative through the Head Start program that has been in existence for a number of years, and we have been very successful. About 75 percent of our teaching assistants also have a child development associate degree.

Mr. Hinojosa. So that type of credential would be more than an associate degree of the community college or less than?

Ms. Pena. It is difficult to say. I want to say it is less.

Mr. Hinojosa. Less than?

Ms. Pena. Yes.

Mr. Hinojosa. Okay. That is fine. And lastly, could you give us an idea of how much is being paid to these individuals who are teaching our children?

Ms. Pena. Oh, my goodness. Now, that I can't recall the figures at this point in time. I do know that our teaching staff...

Mr. Hinojosa. Could you defer to Dr. de los Santos? Do you know the answer to that question, Dr. de los Santos?

Dr. de los Santos. I don't know the exact numbers, but I remember that they are miserable. I remember

that, because in looking at the center directors' salaries at one time, these are folks that, in essence, serve as principals in small campuses, even though they don't have the training of principals.

I remember some of them making \$16, \$17, \$18,000 a year. This is the person that is in charge of the program. So the teachers were not very much above minimum wage.

Mr. **Hinojosa**. Not much above minimum wage?

Ms. **Pena**. Right.

Dr. **de los Santos**. I am going to say \$12 or \$13,000 a year.

Ms. **Pena**. Yes. That is about the correct amount.

Mr. **Martinez**. Would the Chairman yield?

Mr. **Hinojosa**. Yes, I would.

Chairman **Riggs**. May I just claim my time just before you yield to Congressman Martinez just to ask how, I am glad Congressman Hinojosa asked that question. I intended to ask it.

How would that average out then, what you described as being minimum wage or barely above minimum wage, compare with the average salary of an elementary school teacher in McAllen or Hidalgo County?

Dr. **de los Santos**. They are close to minimum wage also, but considerably less. A beginning teacher in Hidalgo County average would be about \$25, \$26,000 a year, fresh out of college, no experience.

Like I said, a teacher at a Head Start center might be, and they are both for nine months of actual work. Actually for teachers it is closer to ten months. The Head Start, if I remember the budgets correctly, it has been more than a year. It is closer to \$11, \$12,000 year. It is considerably less.

Chairman **Riggs**. I yield to Congressman Martinez.

Mr. **Martinez**. Well, that was the question I was going to ask. But to just illustrate right now, there is some concern, with increasing the quality of the Head Start programs by requiring teachers to have a four-year degree.

The funding for Head Start programs would almost have to double if you did that, and if you double the salaries of the teachers by going to qualified teaching credential teachers, you then are going to diminish the moneys available to serve a number of children.

So you are going to give something up for something else. You may improve the quality. There is no doubt you would improve the quality with certified teachers, but then are we going to expand the funding to continue to serve the number of people we are serving?

Because right now, you serve in Hidalgo County 350, and there are 300 on a waiting list. That is almost as many as being served in McAllen. So that, you know, is a real tough situation for someone to face if they really want to do it.

Let me ask you the most obvious question in this whole debate about whether we need to require advanced degrees. It might improve the quality of the teachers and the education of the children. That is not necessarily true, but you might assume it would be.

How much advantage would that be to the child?

I mean, the people that are doing the job now, are they doing an adequate job to get these kids ready for school?

Ms. **Quintanilla**. I want to say something. Excuse me. Going back to that, I think that they are doing a wonderful job. I am speaking as a parent. I know that my daughter's teacher, even now she misses her. She is like, "Can I go visit her? Is she there at the Head Start center?" We pass by, she is like, "Is my teacher there?" I am, like, "No."

So they are doing a real good job. And I think the reason they don't have degrees is because they may

have been former parents. So if you get educated or degreed teachers in there, you are taking from the parents.

Parents have the opportunity to climb that ladder. They start off as a teacher assistant. They get their CDA credential, then they go to a teacher. So I really don't think that it would be much of a difference. In fact, I think you would hurt the program more if you took that and said, "Okay. We are going to get a degreed person in there to be teaching."

I think that the teachers we have now are doing a wonderful job. I think we just need to get out there and serve more children, and I think as a parent just having the training, having Ms. Pena train me and telling me what I needed to do and what needed to be served and just keep on getting that technical training. Without a degree, I could do just as good.

Ms. Pena. To piggyback on that, if I may, what I would like to say is that I do feel that if required quality training is provided or quality teachers, if you would call it degreed teachers, which I have tendency to have a different opinion, but I would implore that funding be provided in order to get our teachers, our CDA teachers, to acquire their bachelor's degree in early childhood development and then pay them to stay within the Head Start program, and not for them to go into the public school system. That is very important.

Ms. Quintanilla. You need not scare the parents and say, "Oh, no, you need to have a degree to become a teacher for Head Start." You need not scare them away. You know, you need to give them that hope that they can do it.

And once they get in there, then you get the training in there, and then you make them feel like "I could go to college, and I could be that teacher with the degree." But you can't scare them that way.

Dr. de los Santos. Obviously, if you have fully certified trained teachers in early childhood development, chances are that they would do a better job than persons who are not so trained.

The cost we talked about would be more than double. The other problem that you would experience is that just here, and I would suspect nationally that there is a shortage of early childhood education teachers.

If you were to turn over this program right now to public schools, for example, and they were to employ nothing but certified teachers, you would need overnight 150 to 200 certified teachers. And I can take you to any campus, not school districts, campuses across the Valley, and chances are that every single one of

those elementary schools will need an early childhood teacher right now.

There is a great need in that area. My daughter just finished college in that area, and she could pick any campus in the Valley for that matter. I am not saying that we should not consider going in that direction, but there are a lot of obstacles that would prevent us from getting there over a short period of time.

I think if it is going to be a goal, it needs to be a long, long range goal.

Mr. **Hinojosa**. Mr. Chairman, I know that you wanted to conclude the first panel about this time, and I would like to make some concluding remarks.

One is that I agree with you that individuals who teach children are not in it for the money that they are paid. They are in it because of the feelings that they have in their heart for teaching children, and it is obvious. It really is.

However, we are going to be listening in the second panel to some exemplary programs in other parts of the state, and we will hear how much is being paid and how they are certified and how they are trained, those who teach the children. And I think it will be very interesting to make some comparisons.

Our children are entitled to the very best that is available, not only in San Antonio and in Houston and in Dallas or Boston or California or New York. Our children should be given the best that is available.

And in looking at the numbers that were given to us by one of the looking at yours, Irma. You said that in 1982, you started with a budget of \$2 1/2 million dollars with 1,080 children. So that, in simple math, you divide those two numbers, we were spending \$2,345 per child.

In 1998, we received, I believe, \$14,885,000, and if you divide that by 2,580, it converts to \$5,769 per child, which is about a 146 percent increase. What is misleading to the public about this information is that you probably have to pay the rent for the centers that rent to teach the children.

And you mentioned, Dr. de los Santos, that we were short of centers. We were short of space. And so again, the numbers can be taken by whomever is making a statement and say that it is being misused or mishandled or whatever.

The important thing, though, is that we are here to see how we can make some corrective changes, some constructive changes that in the end will help prepare our children to be school ready, as Chairman Riggs stated in the opening remarks he made.

So it will be interesting for us to now listen to the second panel and make some comparisons. Thank you.

Chairman **Riggs**. Thank you, Congressman Hinojosa. And I just want to conclude by perhaps putting in perspective this whole funding issue, because it is a very, very difficult one, particularly when you consider the fact that McAllen is pretty typical of most communities across the country in the sense that there is more demand than there is supply.

But when I say, "Put it in perspective," as you probably know the current law that we are looking at modifying as we reauthorize and extend the law, 75 percent of the new money Congress has appropriated large amounts of quote/unquote, new money in recent years is used for the purpose of expanding the program, and 25 percent of the money is used for quality.

Quality is defined in current law as salary increases, benefits, transportation, training, and facilities' improvement. However, there is a further stipulation that 50 percent of the quality money must be used for salary increases.

So one of the things that we are wrestling with and one of the things that, to be very honest with you, what I am contemplating and we will need to confer with Congressman Martinez and Congressman Hinojosa on is whether or not we should stipulate in the new law that it is a goal that at least 50 percent of Head Start classroom teachers have a minimum of an associate degree at the end of the reauthorization period, say five years from now, and whether that is an achievable goal, because you have raised some very valid concerns.

We know that nationally, Head Start teachers are paid \$17,000 a year compared with \$28,000 for elementary teachers. In my mind, that is not adequate compensation for someone who has such intimate involvement and such a critical role in the education and development of our children.

It is, however, more than child care providers are paid. So the Head Start teachers are somewhere in between, but again, far short of what I would consider to be adequate. Now, hold that thought for a moment, and then consider this:

The National Head Start Association, which is represented here today, has made what I think is a very cogent argument. Given the recent changes in welfare laws, that there needs to be more flexibility for the Head Start programs income standards.

They argue that, and we all know that Head Start has traditionally been aimed at the most economically and socially disadvantaged, but they are, as parents, moved from welfare into jobs even at the minimum wage. They may lose eligibility for Head Start but are still considered to be the working poor and are still very needy of the kind of services that the Head Start program provides to them and to their children.

So the National Head Start Association is arguing that we increase the exemption from 10 percent in current law to 25 percent of children exemption from income rules. Again, I think it is a cogent argument.

It is something I would like to consider, but have to be considered in the context of how do we raise the compensation level for Head Start teachers, and what do we do about the fact that the program is only serving 40 percent of eligible children?

Because as I said earlier, I am an advocate of universal early childhood education. So those are just some of the issues that we are wrestling with, and I say all that in light of the fact that we continue to increase, I suspect when we go back to Washington next week, we will really begin the annual budget debate which plays out in terms of the voting decisions that we make on the spending bills.

But I suspect at the end of the day, it may be well into the fall, but I suspect that we will see yet another annual spending increase for Head Start. But it still won't go, in my view, far enough.

We are in a really difficult position, because the funding for Head Start, as well as almost all other federal education programs, comes out of the second largest spending bill, the annual spending bill from the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education.

That same bill provides funding for the national institutes of health, for biomedical research, and that budget has been substantially increased by Congress in a bipartisan fashion over the last few years.

We started looking at maybe taking money away from biomedical research to increase it, or is it going, as we say back in Washington," to plus up the funding" for Head Start and the other education programs.

It is sort of a Hobson's choice when we begin wrestling with these particular issues. Very quickly, I have to ask two more questions that are directly related to the reauthorization, one of which, I think, could have impact from here.

One of the things that we are looking at doing is imposing stringent performance measures on local Head Start grantees, all right, since this is a federal to local program, unusual. Different in this day and age of block granting where we are transferring more and more responsibility of decision-making funding to the states.

The state government is not the conduit. It is not federal, state and local. It is federal to local. And so one of the things that we are considering is withdrawing the funding from local grantees that fail to meet these performance standards and recompetete that money. I guess that is kind of sort of Congressional. In other words, bid that money out to any other qualified interested provider at the local level, if that local grantee fails to meet those performance standards.

Do you think, Dr. de los Santos, that that is a good idea, this idea of introducing that kind of competition at the local level, and how would it have affected the controversy here in Hidalgo County.

Dr. **de los Santos**. Well, the controversy that we had was mainly a governance issue among policy council. Like I said, I think if they had come in, other than in the area of governance, our performance standards, we were doing fairly well.

Our kids were doing well. The teachers were teaching. The center directors were managing centers and so on, the last staff development for teachers and so on.

I don't know that we had major discrepancies in that area or in the area of finance for that matter, but yes, I don't have a problem with that, as long as there is ample opportunity for a center experiencing problems to work them out with direct assistance from DHHS.

If it is kind of like a teacher, who doesn't do the job the first year, you document it, the second year, you document it, the third year, you let her go. So, I think with a process built in that centers understand and local agencies understand that you have to meet the performance standards, and they are there for a reason, because you need to be doing good things for kids.

If you don't over a period of time, and you have been warned and you have been helped and you have been coached, you didn't take the coaching, somebody else is going to do the job.

Chairman **Riggs**. And Ms. Quintanilla, I see that you obtained training in Head Start performance standards. Those are the standards that are already in place that were developed around 1994, I guess, by a panel convened by my Secretary Shalala and Dr. Edward Zigler from Yale University, widely considered the father of Head Start, participated in that. He testified before our committee a few weeks ago back in Washington.

But what we are talking about doing, so you are very clear now, is developing performance measures at the local level that would emphasize academics and educational results. And I want to know if I am off base here, because we have had other witnesses tell us that we have a tendency now to overlook educational results, that, if you will, Head Start has lost interest in educational results. What has been your experience here?

Ms. **Quintanilla**. I think you should, I don't know how to express myself. Excuse me. Would you ask the question differently? Ask the same question, but let me make sure I am getting it right.

Chairman **Riggs**. Would you feel comfortable if the performance standards that were already in place were expanded to include performance standards for educational results that would be applied locally? And we are very specific in terms of some of the things that we are looking at doing.

For example, we are considering now, I don't want to alarm anybody unduly, but we are considering minimum level requirements that, for example, would require that a child know the alphabet letters, that they be able to recognize a word as a unit of print, that they can associate sounds with written words, certain types of phonemic awareness.

Ms. **Quintanilla**. I think that yes. I think it would be a good idea. I know that my daughter Jessica is going into kindergarten this year, and you would be surprised, but her Head Start teacher started talking to her about what she was going to be learning in kindergarten, and she told her that they were going to start teaching her how to read and the sounds of letters.

So now Jessica is like, "What is the sound of an 'a'? Ah, ah.** and what's the sound of a 'c'? Kuh, kuh." You know, and she got this from her Head Start teacher. So now when she sees the letters, she is like, "What is the sound of 'm'? Mm, mm."

You know, so she is doing this. She is doing this, but whether or not they are testing to make sure that all children are doing this, I don't know. I think it should be done. I know Jessica is doing it. I can speak only for myself.

I know Jessica has learned a lot. She is like a little teacher to my four year old. She has taught him his numbers in English and Spanish. She knows her alphabet. She knows her days of the months in English and Spanish. So yes, I think maybe there should be something then to make sure that all children are learning what Jessica has learned.

Chairman **Riggs**. Ms. Pena, in your testimony, you talked about almost 3 million dollars in local contributions. What do you mean by local contributions?

Ms. **Pena**. In-kind services. These are volunteer services either provided by community representatives or parent representatives. For example, we will have a volunteer-assisted teacher normally, a Head Start parent that will volunteer eight hours a day as if they are staff members, and these are in-kind contributions that we account for.

Chairman **Riggs**. So if I add, if my math is correct, when you add local contributions with your annual budget, your cost per child to provide Head Start services currently in the Hidalgo County Head Start program is about \$5,500 per child?

Ms. **Pena**. Yes, including local contributions, yes.

Chairman **Riggs**. Including the contributions. Okay. Two other very controversial questions, but I want to put them on the table, and I want our witnesses in the next panel to, if they would, give some thought to this.

One is the question of welfare reform taking place, being implemented across the country, parents may lose government subsidized day care, in other words, taxpayers subsidized day care, if they do not comply with the welfare rules.

I know not all parents, in fact, I think the figure we have was a little bit less than half of the parents who are currently participating in the Head Start program are eligible for TANF, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, but one of the things that we are looking at is whether or not those families would lose their Head Start eligibility if they did not cooperate with welfare reform, including the requirement in the welfare reform law that paternity be established so that the father could be held responsible for the support of the child.

I don't know if any of the three panelists here want to comment on that, but I wanted to give them, out of fairness, since I am going to pose it to the next panel, that opportunity.

Dr. **de los Santos**. I would like to address that just briefly. I see that as a rule that would penalize the child from getting into Head Start because the father is not identified. If I understand you correctly, you are saying that services would be denied unless paternity is established. I don't think that we should play with our children like that.

Chairman **Riggs**. The parent would have to cooperate in attempting to establish the fatherhood of the child. But the establishment of paternity in each and every case would not be a condition of Head Start eligibility. However cooperation in attempting to identify the father would. I hope you understand the distinction that I am making.

The other great controversial point, and again, it is very appropriate that we ask it here in Congressman Hinojosa's district, and that is the whole question of bilingual education in Head Start.

One of the things that we are looking at doing in the Head Start bill is clarifying that Head Start children

should be taught primarily in English, not exclusively, not any kind of English immersion, but taught primarily in English, and that services for non-English background families should assist them in attaining fluency in English.

Is that presently the case in Hidalgo County, and if not, why not?

Dr. de los Santos. Well, I disagree with the idea that they should be taught primarily in English. I think they should be taught in the language that they bring to the school at an early age and then be moved into the English language as they become familiar with the school setting and so on.

I think it is critical that bilingual education down here be maintained. I don't think any of us question that English is the official language of the country; however, there are many of us that hold very dearly to Spanish and believe strongly that Spanish, particularly in this part of the country, is critical to doing day-to-day business.

I think it is important for our children to be taught in both languages, to understand them both well, to grow learning how to listen, speak, read, and write both languages, and I think the way and the place to start is at the Head Start centers.

Chairman Riggs. I want to make sure that we are absolutely clear on your testimony, Dr. de los Santos, and that is that your position is that children should be taught non-English-speaking or limited English-speaking children should be taught primarily in their native language, which, obviously, in the Rio Grande Valley is Spanish, in the Head Start program, and that the transition to English fluency would come once they entered the public schools or once they entered_

Dr. de los Santos. In the Head Start program. It could be within the Head Start program. I don't want to think that the child comes to school the first day and, you know, he will be met in the English language which he may not be familiar with. It could be within the three year old or four year old, and I suspect that teachers would begin to work with children in both languages very early.

Chairman Riggs. What percentage of the children in the Hidalgo County Head Start program are non-English or limited English speaking and come from bilingual families? Do you know?

Dr. **de los Santos**. I am not sure.

Ms. **Pena**. Yes. I gave you some figures, if you want to look at some of the things that I provided for you. The dominant language currently for this past year, English dominant language was 561 children, which are about 19 percent. Okay? And Spanish dominant is 81 percent. So therefore, again, looking at Dr. de los Santos' remarks right now, it is critical that we go into or maintain the system that we are doing now as far as bilingual education.

Chairman **Riggs**. And Ms. Quintanilla, did you want to comment at all? I asked two very tough questions, and I think you responded to the one, but I want to give you an opportunity to address the language issue as well.

Ms. **Quintanilla**. I think that they should, especially here in Hidalgo County or here in the Rio Grande Valley. We are very, my little girl Jessica, in fact, I can tell you, I am very proud that she speaks both languages and she understands them both very well.

My little boy doesn't as well as Jessica, and I am talking, he doesn't speak the Spanish as well as Jessica or understand it. So we have Jessica trying to teach him Spanish. And I think that that is very important, especially here.

I think we need to teach these children their language, and then they can learn how to speak English. They are learning. They will pick it up. They are like sponges. They just hold everything in.

So I think that you need to go ahead and just let them enter Head Start and speak their language.

Chairman **Riggs**. We will go back to the questions I asked about education performance standards. Would you support an education performance standard that says in the case of non-English background children progress towards acquisition of the English language. In other words, the local grantee, the local Head Start operator would have to show that they are working with or assisting non-English speaking, children in making steady progress towards acquisition of the English language?

Ms. **Quintanilla**. Yes. I think we would benefit from that, the children would.

Chairman **Riggs**. Since I am going to recognize Congressman Hinojosa and Congressman Martinez for their concluding remarks, and then we will excuse this panel.

Mr. **Hinojosa**. Mr. Chairman, I am happy that you heard from our presenters, the feelings that they have, which I think expresses the same as our audience and our community in that this is a bilingual, bicultural area.

The state of Texas is blessed with having some very good exemplary bilingual education programs, a legislature that is very supportive of bilingual education, and a governor who supports it very strongly. And so we differ from the great state of California as it refers to bilingual education. At least I would say that as it refers to limited English proficient students in Head Start. We would do best if given the opportunity to teach the art of learning in the language that they understand.

But more importantly, I think that we are going to hear in the second panel something that I read in the materials last night from one of the presenters, that the critical period for developing math and logic skills appears to be from age one to four.

And so the question that the chairman asked about accountability, about being able to test the children to see if they are moving towards this ability that children have, are they being given the opportunity to learn that skill? That is something that I hope you will support, because that is the only way in which we are going to be able to move our children to be school ready, to be kindergarten ready, and be able to assure that they will graduate from high school and go on to college.

This is the solution to reduce the dropout rate amongst our Hispanic students in high school, which is exceedingly high, over 30 percent, as compared to the other groups, be they African-American or Anglo children. Anglos, I believe, have 8-percent dropout, and African-American children, 12 percent, where ours is over 30 percent.

And so by addressing this issue that we are discussing here today, I believe we are addressing the solution that is recommended in many of the studies that have been presented to Congress this year.

So, Mr. Chairman, I think that this first panel has been excellent, and we applaud the work that y'all have done.

Chairman **Riggs**. Congressman Martinez.

Mr. **Martinez**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would say that be careful of what you ask for, because you just might get it. The fact is that we don't want a micromanaging federal government, I don't think that is a good idea.

There are some of us on both sides of the aisle that talk about local flexibility and local control. The whole program was designed to begin with to give local control. Now, I have no problem with setting standards and expecting people to perform to those standards, but I do have a problem when we start stipulating the exactness of that for the simple reason that, like I said, we become micromanagers of a program we never intended to micromanage.

Secondly, the zealots out there would misinterpret those regulations, and then we would have a process of defunding of certain programs. Right now as the law stands, we can take away a grantee contract or subcontract because they are not performing.

But if they are not doing it, then herein in a couple of cases the problem lies with the Department of Health and Human Services and their agency that their section of their agency that governs these things. They are not acting.

If they were acting, then there would be programs that we have heard bad news about and programs that criticize the whole program because of that one program being bad. That program wouldn't have existed.

But the main problem I have is that the law is now that community money that is that community serving that, even if you take the grant away from that grantee, you still have to find another grantee in that community to take over that service so that the money stays with the community.

Any penalty for taking away a grant from a particular group because they didn't perform, I would feel I could not go along unless it was still stipulated that the money stay in the community, that super grantee make sure that they find another group in that community so that the money maintained there is maintained there and provided those services for those children that need it.

I have one last question to ask, because in your statement, Dr. de los Santos, you said that offers by DHHS for expansion of programs should include funds for buildings as well as funds for maintenance and operation.

There is no question that they provide the monies for maintenance and operation. You can remodel that was actually my creation in the last reauthorization, because we heard from the National Head Start Association that in many cases they took buildings that reduce rents, and that they were strapped for money to improve those buildings at the reduced rent, and sometimes were even given buildings to use, but they needed moneys to restore them.

And initially, the law didn't allow that, because what happened initially was that when a Head Start

program would come in and improve a facility, the tenant, the landlord would then kick them out and then rent the place for much more rent than he would have gotten anyway without those improvements. We have set it up in such a way that we are assured that that won't happen in the case of the grantee getting the monies for the program.

But you add a dimension here that at the time I tried to add that dimension too, because I thought that in many cases the previous situation wouldn't happen if the Head Start organization owned the building. And there is nothing in the law to preclude the Head Start agency from either getting a contributed building or going out and raising private capital to buy a building and put it in there.

But are you suggesting in that statement that maybe there should be funds for, on a matching basis, maybe Head Start programs to buy buildings, when you say, "Funding for buildings"?

Dr. de los Santos. Yes, sir. That is exactly what I am suggesting. And in fact, I know that we did some of that in the regular Head Start program where there was one-time funding for building buildings for Head Start, and the Hidalgo County Head Start program owns a number of buildings. We don't have any problem with that in terms of modernizing to rent and somebody else taking the carpet out from under you and things like that.

So yes, I am suggesting that you should seriously consider including in the refunding some monies for building buildings.

Mr. Martinez. Very good. Well, I would certainly be agreeable to that. The Hispanic Caucus, Inc., that is the Hispanic Congressional Caucus of which Kiki De La Garza is still a standing member of. Way back when Kiki de La Garza was a member of the caucus and the caucus was much smaller than it is now, we decided to go out and find private contributions to build a building to house the Hispanic Caucus, Inc., and, in fact, we got a matching grant from Anheuser-Busch, wasn't it? Anheuser-Busch, they gave us a challenge. If we would raise \$200,000, they would match it with \$200,000.

Now, I am thinking that if we provide that incentive in the bill, that if you can get a major corporation to say, "You raise privately around here \$100,000, and we will give you \$100,000 so you can get a building." The Boys Club in my community, Monterey Park, did the same thing with a major corporation. They got a matching grant to build the building they have now. So that is a real possibility. And maybe the legislation ought to provide for that possibility to take place. I have no further questions, Mr. Riggs.

Chairman Riggs. Thank you, Congressman Martinez. I guess that raises the question whether you had to install a Budweiser tap in the building. Dr. de los Santos, thank you very much. Ms. Pena, thank you very

much. And Ms. Quintanilla, thank you very much for your testimony and much good luck in the future.

You are excused at this time, and we will call forward our second panel of witnesses. As the second panel is being seated, we will take a very brief five-minute recess.

[Brief recess.]

Chairman **Riggs**. Will the subcommittee come to order. We will reconvene the hearing. At this time, I would like to recognize Congressman Hinojosa for the purpose of introducing our second panel of witnesses.

Mr. **Hinojosa**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is a pleasure to introduce the presenters in panel two. I will introduce them one by one as they make their presentation instead of all four at one time.

We are going to start with Dr. Anna Maria Rodriguez. Dr. Rodriguez is the Educational Psychology Department Chair at the University of Texas-Pan American. She has provided ongoing training for Hidalgo County and other Head Start programs throughout South Texas and will report on findings from early grade research and the importance of the early years as critical periods of learning to assure that Head Start teachers have the necessary qualifications.

And on a personal note, I would like to say that I have known Dr. Anna Maria Rodriguez for many, many years. I served on the local school board in Mercedes and then on the Texas State Board of Education for many years.

And during that time, I often sought her advice and counsel on the programs that deal with special populations, special education, gifted and talented, as well as, special programs for migrant education and bilingual education.

And so it is with great honor and respect that I introduce Dr. Rodriguez.

STATEMENT OF DR. ANNA MARIA RODRIGUEZ, DEPARTMENT CHAIR, EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS-PAN AMERICAN, EDINBURG, TEXAS

Dr. **Rodriguez**. Thank you, Congressman Hinojosa. Both Congressman Riggs and Congressman Martinez, as well as Congressman Hinojosa, it gives me a great deal of pleasure, and I feel privileged to

be given this opportunity to address this hearing, particularly because I have been an educator for 35 years, and I take every opportunity today in my life to speak to some of the issues that I believe are so very critical.

I was a classroom teacher for 10 years, and in the last 25 years, I have been involved with the education of professionals in education, not only teachers at the undergraduate level, but also the graduate level. I also prepare counselors for public schools, and I am also a licensed professional counselor.

And so in that role, many times I find myself dealing with human beings who are in need of assistance and help, because they need to remediate or change some things that didn't go well for them in their lives. So I see them at the other end.

And so these days, I am very, very interested and concerned about looking at it from another perspective, and that is putting our eggs in the early childhood basket, because I believe that prevention, we have a greater probability of success if we prevent some things than if we have to wait and remediate later.

So I was very pleased that Congressman Hinojosa asked me this morning to address you in an area that I believe is extremely important. I could go on and on about what I have learned and what I know in terms of cognitive development, in terms of how children learn, etc.

But today I would like to limit my comments to what I believe is going to be the beginnings of what will revolutionize our educational system in this country, and that is the decade of the 90s that is being quoted as the decade of the brain and what we now know about the brain, that research is telling us. I believe Congressman Martinez and Riggs both alluded to that issue earlier.

So I would like to share some of what I have summarized from the literature that is going on that I think are very significant for the reauthorization of Head Start programs. One piece of research that is out there that we know about is that at birth, a baby is born with all the nerve cells that it will ever have.

The nerve cells, which are called neurons, are not connected to each other at birth. The developmental task for the child after birth is to connect or wire a brain. The major connections, which are called synapses, are joined within the first five years of life.

In other words, at birth, the child has all of the circuitry that is needed for eventual learning. But it is after birth that the child then begins to make those connections. This is what the research is telling us.

The refinement or discarding of synapsis continues into puberty. Now, that does not mean that after puberty, the adult ceases to learn. One of the other pieces of research tells us that the brain is also a concept called plasticity that tells us that the individual continues to learn throughout life.

But most of the process after that, after puberty, is a refinement process of what is already there basically. And while the brain is born with the circuitry needed for the wiring, it is a flood of sensory experiences

that provides the connections for development and refinement.

From the studies that have been concluded that early childhood experiences are crucial to the development of these synapses, rich and varied experiences are more likely to produce rich brain connections that will remain wired for life. Poor or lack of early childhood experiences are more likely to result in lost or impaired brain connections.

One of the other pieces of knowledge that has been given to us by brain researchers is that there are critical periods or windows of opportunity for different parts of the brain during which wiring is at an optimal level. One such important critical period is related to the acquisition of language.

In studies conducted by Dr. Kuhl, it has been found that an infant maps the sound structure of language in the first six to twelve months of life. Within their first six months, children develop language magnets that attract their ears to the sound of their native languages.

A conclusion reached by scientists, therefore, is that the critical period for learning languages is early childhood. Between the ages of one to five, a child can learn several languages simultaneously and speak them without an accent.

The window of opportunity does not close at this age, but the older a person gets, the more difficult learning a second or third language becomes. Here I will digress from my text and comment because of some of the questions that were raised earlier. Given this research and what we now know about brain research, it appears that the critical time for a child to learn languages is between the ages of zero and five.

One of my recommendations in the end is going to be that I believe that not only do we need to reauthorize Head Start and need to put more money into it, but we also need to expand it to include ages zero to five, that the requirements be from zero to five, because that is a very critical time.

And because of that, then we would place a heavy emphasis in teaching the children both languages. In this case, for example, our case, our children could learn two languages at an early age rather than waiting until they get to high school and then require them to take a foreign language, which makes it more difficult for them to learn a second language.

Another of the findings that the research is saying to us is that the window of opportunity for vision and vision development is between birth and six months of age. So appropriate visual stimuli during this time creates the synopsis that form during this critical period.

They also find that the critical period for vocabulary and speech development is between birth to three years. The research indicates that an adult's vocabulary is largely determined by the speech heard within the first three years of life. When Mayor Montalvo spoke about the 400 words that are required before you get into kindergarten, I was thinking, "Well, the first three years of life is when this child needs to

learn those 400 words."

The critical period for developing synopsis that helps develop math and logic skills appears to be from ages one to four. Exposure to concepts such as the difference between few and many helps children to develop these skills.

So given some of the studies that we now have in terms of brain research and there are ongoing studies that are also looking at emotional development as well as cognitive development, and Dr. Coleman, who speaks to us in terms of emotional intelligence and the development of emotional intelligence in children tells us that early childhood years are the critical years for developing emotional intelligence.

So based on that, one of my recommendations is that as part of the work of Head Start, we need to continue to encourage neuroscientists to continue to research in terms of the brain, but to also be speaking to educators so that educators can take what the neuroscientists are discovering and help us to translate that into policies and practices in schools.

Based on all of that, I recommend further that, as I mentioned earlier, that the Head Start program expand it ages for children from between birth and five; that you make a provision for a curriculum that is based on knowledge of human growth and development, cognitive theory and research evidence, such as what we just heard. Including the latest findings of brain research; that you develop the curriculum that utilizes developmentally appropriate practices for young children based on what scientists, psychologists, and educators know; that have you make provisions for total approach to serving the needs of young children, including meeting their physical, emotional, social, and behavioral needs; that you require professional preparation and appropriate credentials for persons who make up the personnel who work with the children.

I listened to the panel before us, some of the statements and comments they made, and what I very strongly advocate is that the teachers of the children, based on what we know, need to have training, need to be credentialed. That does not mean or does not say that they could not come from the pool of the parents who are already in that process, and we are encouraging them to continue their education so then eventually they could become the credentialed teachers who have the knowledge about what we need to do with the child.

Again, continue to make provisions for strong parent education and training, and this is really important because I believe that we need to help parents learn what it is that they need to do in the home to encourage the children to develop these brain connections that we are talking about. So it is not just about helping the child to get ready for school, but rather giving them those very beginning concepts that the child needs.

And then we include a research component in the provisions of the bill so that we can continue to identify those practices that are successful in kindergarten kids with other programs. And I will, at this point, conclude.

See Appendix D for the Written Statement of Dr. Anna Maria Rodriguez

Mr. **Hinojosa**. Thank you. That was excellent, Dr. Rodriguez. I would like to now introduce the second presenter, Dr. Sylvia Hatton. Dr. Hatton is the executive director of Region One Education Service Center.

She will address the important linkage between Head Start and public schools. Dr. Hatton will also discuss the advantages of having Head Start under the umbrella of an educational institution, the advantages such as easy access to educational environment, quality educational facilities, trained teachers, and playgrounds. Dr. Hatton.

STATEMENT OF DR. SYLVIA HATTON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, REGION ONE EDUCATION SERVICE CENTER, EDINBURG, TEXAS

Dr. **Hatton**. Good morning, Congressmen, and I would like to begin my remarks by thanking not just the three congressmen, but also all the members of your staff who traveled with you to South Texas for this critical hearing.

I am not going to read my testimony, as you have that. I will simply address the panel and attempt to weave into my presentation this morning some comments in response to earlier questions.

Dr. **Hatton**. In public education we have a framework for building quality schools known in the literature as the success connections. And the success connections tell us to do, in the end, if what we want to do is create quality schools, then we must align everything that we do, every action, every policy decision, every initiative, every expenditure must be aligned with what we know.

It must be driven by the best educational and medical research available to us. It must be driven by what we believe about children, about learning, about parents, families, and communities, and it must be absolutely driven by what we want to accomplish in the end. It starts with the end in mind.

And I applaud you, Congressman Riggs, for your early introduction saying that the essential element of a Head Start program is school readiness. Because I believe that what every single person in this room

wants is for every child currently in the Head Start program and every child in our community to be successful academically, to transition from a K-12 education into higher education, and eventually to integrate successfully, economically, educationally, and professionally, familiarly, in every way into their community.

So that is what we want, success for every child. Success defined in terms of outcomes as adults, productive citizenship, and productive contributing members of community, and more than anything, loving, nurturing, and supporting parents.

So I applaud you. I congratulate you for that. I think that is exactly where we need to go with Head Start. Now, I would like to talk a little bit about what we know, and it kind of connects with what Dr. Rodriguez was talking about.

What we know from the medical and the educational literature is that birth to age eight are critical years for learning. They are critical years for cognitive development, for physical development, for social and emotional and behavioral development.

And what we also know from the literature, and it is very clear, that the earlier you intervene in the child's life, the earlier you provide for the child's nurturing experiences that guide him successfully into the public school arena, the more success the child will have as he or she moves through the system and eventually exits the system.

There are many successful models for public education, for private education, and I am a product of both, I guess. Early on, I am a product of a Catholic school education from pre-kindergarten through eighth grade and then on to a public education in high school and in college.

And a lot of what I talk about today is driven not just by the fact that I am an educator and I have 27 years in the profession and I have a Ph.D. in public school leadership and that I have a background working with handicapped children and gifted children, but also by who I am.

I am a native Valleyite. I was born in Edinburg. I was born into a low socioeconomic-status family. My parents were not high school graduates. My mother was not even a junior high graduate. I was a dominant Spanish speaker. I am a product of a quality bilingual program, and yes, I support bilingual education, because I believe that it has made me tremendously advantaged, professionally and individually, to be able to have equal ease and facility in two languages.

So, Congressman Riggs, I, of course, believe in bilingual education from both perspectives. But what we also know about children is that parent income levels, parent education levels, size of family, single-parent versus two-parent families, all of those factors impact a child's academic success, and I applaud Head Start locally for employing parents of these children and for continuing to build their proficiency and their skills educationally.

However, the educator side of me also knows that working in early learning programs is a specialized area, and it requires special knowledge and certification. We have had a national model for transitioning early learning programs from associate level or paraprofessional level into a degreed program in that special education.

We did start with level 3 certification or paraprofessional certification saying, "If you meet all of these hours of training, then you may participate as a teacher under the supervision of a degreed certified educator specialist," while we built that pool that Dr. de los Santos talked about of certified teachers. So there have been successful models implemented before moving us from a predominantly paraprofessional to a professional environment for learning in early learning.

What I also heard this morning is that the per pupil expenditures in Hidalgo County for Head Start are over \$5,000 per student. That is comparable to the public school expenditures per pupil in this area. Of course, we are a low, low area, but that approximately matches the per pupil expenditures for full-day programs with certified teachers, certified administrators, counselors, nurses, and so forth.

So what I know is the best of all possible worlds for early learning is a highly-specialized learning environment with a rigorous comprehensive integrated curriculum taught by certified specialists, supported by continuous parent involvement and respect, continuous parent education so that they can continue to improve their capabilities and their capacities.

And I believe that all of these things can be accomplished in the reauthorization of Head Start. I think that what has to be accomplished immediately can certainly be planned for and accomplished over the short run, not even necessarily the long run.

I believe that the dollars are never adequate. More would be better, and I would ask for more dollars so that more children could be served, because I think that is already been said over and over that the earlier the child gets the experience in school, the more successful the child will be. And I know that you want to keep it to five minutes. I will conclude with that.

Mr. **Hinojosa**. Thank you, Dr. Hatton. Thank you very much. The next presenter is Ms. Blanche Russ-Glover. Ms. Russ-Glover is the chief executive officer of Parent/Child, Incorporated, a nonprofit agency chartered by the State of Texas to serve 68 Head Start centers throughout the San Antonio metropolitan area. She will discuss the importance of community collaboration with the Head Start programs, the success of Parent/Child as a Head Start grantee, and the characteristics of an exemplary program. Ms. Blanche Russ-Glover.

See Appendix E for the Written Statement of Dr. Sylvia Hatton

***STATEMENT OF BLANCHE A. RUSS-GLOVER, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER,
PARENT/CHILD, INCORPORATED, SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS***

Ms. **Russ-Glover**. Thank you Congressman Hinojosa, and to Mr. Riggs and Mr. Martinez, how are you? Good to see you again.

Mr. **Martinez**. Same here.

Ms. **Russ-Glover**. First of all, I want to say thank you for the invitation. I never want to pass up an opportunity to talk about making life better for mankind, and certainly in San Antonio when we talk about Head Start, we are talking about making life better for mankind. So I am appreciative of this opportunity.

You indicated that you want me to talk about the collaborative efforts we have in San Antonio. But if I may, please, just say a couple of things before I get into the collaborations that we have, and that is that we would want to insure that funding for Head Start programs continue to be from federal to local. I felt I really wanted to get that out on the table.

As we talk about the collaboration in San Antonio, there is a need for collaboration, simply because, when you have 36,000 children in San Antonio, in Bexar County, who are poor and who qualify for Head Start services, there is no way these services can be provided by just using the money that is provided by the federal government.

You have to be able to look at all of the things that exist in your city or your community or your county and make some decisions, "How can I best extend the dollars that the federal government gives me to meet the needs of the children and families in the area that I have been funded to serve?"

You must do it by building partnerships. In the old days, y'all probably weren't born then, but I have been with Head Start since 1965. And during those days you had just dribbles of money, and we were looked on as Mom and Pop. So we had to beg, borrow, and we didn't steal, but we had to do everything to get the money.

Chairman **Riggs**. You were resourceful.

Ms. **Russ-Glover**. To be able to get money to meet the needs of the children and the program. But at that time it was called "mobilization of local resources." So we had to do what we could do.

And suddenly the light has come on in somebody's head, and they decided, "Now, we need to call this collaboration, because mobilization of local resources is just too old, too antiquated, and we are rapidly going into another millennium. So they have decided to call it collaboration, which is okay.

But let's don't say who you need to collaborate with, because there are some entities out there who want to collaborate with you just to soup you up, change everything, and not let you provide the kinds of services you need to provide.

In listening to a number of the comments that have been made about public school and Head Start, I guess, versus non-profits, I need to say that in San Antonio, we are a private nonprofit 501(c)3 agency. We have 17 independent school districts in San Antonio. I have centers in 11 of those independent school districts.

Therefore, you don't have to be under the umbrella of, for example, a public school or a service center in order for you to collaborate with the public schools. When you are either the executive director or the CEO, one of the main things that you must do is know your community, know what is out there, and you must know what you need.

And the only way you can determine what is out there and determine what you need is by conducting a community assessment. And when you conduct the assessment, you don't conduct it in a vacuum. You include everyone that is in that city or that community -- the city government, the county government, all of the public schools, all of the health providers, all of the other programs that provide services to young children.

You must do an assessment of everything that is in that community, and they must be a part of the assessment. Once that has been done and you know what the need is, you know where the resources are, then you are able to take your federal dollars and do some bargaining, so to speak, because you know what is in each of the segments of your area, what is existing out there, and what those needs are.

We collaborate with over 70 different agencies, entities, and municipalities, because within Bexar County there are a number of very small municipalities with San Antonio being the largest one, of course. And it is critical that you know what the pulse is in each of these small municipalities, as well as in San Antonio.

With the independent school districts we are able to provide extended day by them going to the public schools in the morning for a half day, coming to Head Start in the evening with that group, and we developed what we call a flip-flop.

Then the group that comes to us in the morning to Head Start, they will go to the public schools in the evening. So I end up not spending 100 percent of what would be spent on that child to give him a full day.

The public school picks up a portion of it, and we pick up a portion of it. So that has been a collaborative that has worked extremely well.

The other portion of the collaborative within the independent school districts is, they provide all of the transportation free, all of the space is free, janitorial services are free, all of the training that the public school teachers get that work with their kindergarten children, my staff get the same training. When we provide training within Head Start, the public school teachers in the districts where we have our centers, they come and they become a part of our training.

When you talk about preparing children to be ready to enter public school ready to learn, there are a number of ingredients that one must bring into play, because if you are only going to zero in on cognition and you forget about, because we know that a well-fed child's opportunity of learning is much greater than a child that is hungry.

Let's not get hung up now and get tunnel vision. We must think global, and we must realize in dealing with at-risk children you must take a holistic approach, and that is serving all of the child's need but not isolating the child. You have to bring into play his entire family. In other words, you accept the child and his family where he is, regardless of how much baggage he might bring along. You must accept him.

And if you are going to do that and serve from a holistic approach, you must collaborate, collaborate, collaborate, but be very careful and only collaborate with those that you know will have similar philosophies, will have concerns about mankind, will be accepting of children with different languages and families with different languages and different cultures, be willing to accept that parent where he is as a partner to the teacher, not someone who comes and drops the child and runs off.

Now, if you are going to do that and you are going to take a holistic approach, you must collaborate for health services. In San Antonio, we have San Antonio Metropolitan Health District. Then we have nine other clinics that we collaborate with. All of our health services are free. Comprehensive health services, they are all free, because we collaborate with all of these entities.

And then we have the UT Health Science Center there which provides for all of our dental screening, dental follow-up free. Then we have the University of Incarnate Word that provides for all of our free counseling for parents, for staff working with children with disabilities.

But I guess what I am trying to say is, if you are going to be the leader and the person held responsible for the Head Start program, you cannot bury your head in the sand. You must know all the regulations, not some, all. And you must know them thoroughly. You must be able to articulate this to your parents.

And while I am talking about parents, I am jumping a little bit, but it is critical that we realize training is already available for parents. It is already available for those parents that serve on policy councils. I don't believe it is necessary to write something in the reauthorization dealing with training for parents, because it is already there.

And if you are unfamiliar with the revised Head Start Performance Standards, there is a section that deals specifically with that. So I see no reason to reinvent that wheel, but if you really don't know what the law is and what the law says and what you can do and can't do, you are going to have a problem.

But if you really know that, you know your community, you know the needs, then you go out and you insure that every table where there is something going on that is good for children and poor families, if you can't sit there, you insure that someone from your program sits there, because this is where negotiations begin in order to have collaboration.

And we must realize that we are dealing with poor people, and poor people bring a lot of baggage, a lot of health baggage, a lot of nutrition baggage, a lot of aimlessness, and a number of those things. And Head Start just cannot give you sufficient dollars to be able to take care of all those baggages. So you must go out and collaborate.

We have the Spurs there in San Antonio. That is another one of our collaborators, very good, generous collaborators. We have the Pan American League of Women. That is a club in San Antonio where they fund one center in totality for three months during the year. They give us the hard cash for it.

So you see, you have just got to work with everyone. Bexar County Commissioners Court, we collaborate with them. They build centers for us. They have appropriated the money. The city of San Antonio builds centers. They give us centers. And believe it or not, in San Antonio, we have 23 centers that are rent free. We do not pay any rent. But that takes hard work.

I would not like to see the reauthorization address who you must collaborate with at the local level, because what works in San Antonio might not work somewhere else, and if you are in a very small rural area, you are not going to have a lot of people and a lot of entities to collaborate with. And I know my time is up.

Chairman **Riggs**. I don't think she needs a lot of encouragement.

Mr. **Hinojosa**. You did an excellent job, excellent job. Thank you very much. We are going to move to Ms. Enriquez, who is the next presenter.

I would like to say that Dr. Blanca Enriquez is director of Region Nineteen Educational Service Center's Head Start program in El Paso, Texas. This program has been recognized as an exemplary program by the Department of Health and Human Services Agency for their exemplary services to children and families.

Dr. Enriquez will discuss the success of El Paso's Head Start program, the high number of children

served, the excellent quality of services offered, and the continued expansion of the program. Delighted to have you, Dr. Enriquez.

See Appendix F for the Written Statement of Ms. Blanche A. Russ-Glover

STATEMENT OF DR. BLANCA ENRIQUEZ, DIRECTOR, REGION NINETEEN EDUCATION SERVICE CENTER, EL PASO, TEXAS

Dr. **Enriquez**. Thank you, Congressman Hinojosa. Good morning, Chairman Riggs and Congressman Martinez, invited guests. I thank you for the opportunity to come before you today.

I am privileged to serve as a public servant for the Head Start program in El Paso, Texas. I have served as the Head Start director for 11 years, and previously to that, 14 years in public schools as a teacher assistant, as a teacher, and an administrator.

I preface my comments with a very brief description of El Paso, because it gives you the context of where I live in. El Paso is a border metroplex. Population has peaked at 700,000. We have a very young population. The average age is about 25.

We have been ranked the fifth poorest county in the nation. Our unemployment is a steady 8 percent, and about 70 percent of our population is Hispanic. El Paso is also home to the third largest Head Start program in the state of Texas. We serve 3,326 three- and four-year-old children and 93 infants, toddlers_preparing to serve 93 infant, toddlers, and pregnant moms.

We have been recognized as a model program. During our last four consecutive federal reviews, we have been 99 to 100 percent compliance. The question in your mind is probably, how did you get there? How did you get there considering that we are a fairly new program.

We were granted the program through a competitive bid 11 years ago, and our growth has been phenomenal. We started with 1,554 children and now are serving 3,326. We started out with 192 employees and now have about 600 employees; 11 centers to 26 centers; and service to one county, El Paso, to now servicing two counties, El Paso and Hudspeth.

So what has contributed to our success? I offer you the following ideas and practices that we have based on our experience. First of all, one of our underlying focuses is, we must focus on the customer, and we must identify who the customer is. And in Head Start, the customer is children and family. Our primary customer is children and family. Our secondary customer is the federal government who funds us.

In our organization, every person must entirely be focused on the children and his or her family. If all that is undertaken, the driving force should be how will this help the children? How will this help the family? If it helps, you do it. If it doesn't help, you don't do it. Simple as that.

If the decision is to engage in the activity, the next question should be in your mind, will this meet performance standards, enhance performance standards, or exceed performance standards? So then you begin to develop your own evaluation of your program as you are implementing it.

So guided by this focus truly targeted our business in Head Start, and our business in Head Start is children and families receiving high quality comprehensive services. That is your first premise. Your second premises is, I need you to imagine and live the administration and management of a Head Start program as a creative tapestry of a dream philosophy coupled with a quality business philosophy and intertwine those with the needs, the resources, and the aspirations of the community that you serve.

Precisely what Ms. Glover was saying is, you have got to know your community. You have got to have a dream. Given the results of your community needs assessment, you must dream. You must create those services that produce positive results for your community.

The flexibility and the local option in the Head Start regulation allows you to do precisely that, because it is not micromanaged, because you are able to meet those needs given the resources and the aspirations. It allows you to be proactive in meeting the needs of your children and your families.

Ladies and gentlemen, if you don't dream, you don't create. If you don't create, you stagnate, or you run the risk of becoming very reactive in the many things that you do in Head Start. I know I don't have a lot of time, or I would give you a lot of examples of the many dreams that we have. Maybe we can have lunch, and we can do that.

After your dreams, you add to your dreams a business philosophy. Head Start is a complex corporate organization. It is not a mom-and-pop shop anymore. It is not what it started out in 1965. It has become, with all of the expansion and all of its comprehensiveness and the research that goes with it, it has become a complex corporate organization, and its administration and management must be guided by business sense.

When you study, you incorporate successful high-quality producing business practices in all areas of your operation from design to implementation to evaluation. I would like for you to consider three concepts.

One, the very first one deals with leadership. The Head Start director sets the tone for the entire program. The Head Start director must have a vision. Five to ten years from now, where is this program going to be? Where is this community going to be? What kind of results do we need to have so that we can have an educated contributing populace?

You must be flexible. You must be adaptable to change as well. You have got to achieve the support for

your vision from your stakeholders, and your stakeholders in any community will be your board of directors, will be your policy council, and will be your staff. They must buy into your vision. And your role as the CEO, as the Head Start director is to sell that vision that you have for the community.

In addition to being the leader, the Head Start director must practice what is called "shared leadership." We have heard about it already this morning. You must share decision making with the board and the policy council. That is where you divide the, quote/unquote, power.

You must empower the staff at all levels to make decisions in their areas of expertise. Who am I, the Head Start director, to tell the bus driver how to develop his routes in order to pick up the children? The bus driver should be empowered to make those decisions, like you empower the teachers to be able to teach our children and to meet them emotionally and socially and linguistically. This results in shared responsibility, shared accountability, and it builds trust and commitment within your staff. Above all, the Head Start director must lead with integrity, with respect, and with compassion.

Next, in terms of your business sense, you have got to partnership, and we have looked at partnership. And partnership is more like collaboration. It is not coordination. It is not cooperation. In partnerships, we bring the resources to the table. You decide how you will accomplish your task. You roll up your sleeves, and we do it. We do it together. You don't do this, and I don't do this. We do it together.

The types of partnerships that are very critical to Head Start is one internal partnership, partnerships among the staff, your administrative staff and your center staff. Within your center staff, they must become partners in service to who? The customer -- children and families.

You must partnership with your parents at the center level. At the administrative level, you must partnership with your policy council. You must involve them meaningfully, because, after all, they are the customers, and they should be involved in the decisions that are made for their children.

And your external partnerships that my colleague here so greatly explained, those are very important, and you see them across the nation in all Head Start programs where we partnership with businesses, with government entities, with all kinds of service providers in our communities.

Last, but not least, very important to the administration of a program is systems thinking. We must replace isolated coordinated component services with a system of interrelated services that focus on the whole child and his environment. This, gentlemen, produces a staff that is process oriented, that is data driven.

We must take a look at the data. We collect a lot of data in Head Start. Many times we don't use it. We document it. We shelve it. We must teach our staff to use the data, to make decisions for the program, and the staff must operate in a continuous improvement mode.

What we did today may have to change tomorrow because we will continuously be improving services to

children and families. Putting all that together creates an environment that is high quality for the children, both the physical environment, the learning environment, a safe and nurturing environment.

A program's capacity and willingness to dream and to operate promoting practice of leadership, partnership, and systems thinking will assist in maintaining a competitive advantage in the midst of change and growth. These ideas and practices, though not a panacea, have been proven to yield success.

Of course, our success is not solely based on the ideas, but they are also based in conjunction with National Head Start and the federal government's design. The Head Start is comprehensive. It is flexible and allows us the local control structure that we are able to make decisions for our communities.

The San Antonio community is very different from the El Paso community. It is, like, different from the Hidalgo community, and it requires differences in program implementation.

You need to continue the expansion of Head Start. It is very critical. There is a lot of children out there that are not being served. In El Paso, our statistics show that we have identified 24,700 preschoolers in the county of El Paso. Between Head Start and between the public school's four-year-old program we are only serving 10,000, close to 11,000 children. So there is a lot of children not being served.

And we need to continue to focus on strong parental involvement. In addition, what has made us successful has been the support of the regional office. The regional office, Region Six out of Dallas, has provided support and technical assistance to El Paso in order for us in 11 years to make a reality of those dreams that we have.

I urge you, the committee, to support the reauthorization of the current National Head Start design. And I was real quick, and I thank you so much for your time.

See Appendix G for the Written Statement of Ms. Blanca E. Enriquez

Chairman **Riggs**. Dr. Enriquez, thank you very much. It is quite clear that Head Start of El Paso has a very dynamic director. And I want to thank each of you ladies for your very, very insightful and, I think, very constructive testimony as we turn our attention to the reauthorization.

I just want to ask a couple of quick questions before, again, I recognize Congressman Hinojosa and kind of working back towards me. I want to ask, I guess, Dr. Enriquez and Ms. Russ-Glover if our assumption is correct. That is to say, is welfare reform changing the way, let me say, welfare reform and/or the

demand for expanded care, full-day care changing the way you do business? Dr. Enriquez. All right. Either one.

Ms. **Russ-Glover**. Yes. As a matter of fact, it is. We are in situations in San Antonio where we are working with what is called the CCMS. That is the day care that is in support of welfare reform.

We are working in concert with them, and as a matter of fact, we are the largest provider of child care in San Antonio for the welfare to work. But the problem that is existing is, we are having families who are coming to us now who have never worked before, simply because they want to continue to receive the assistance that they are getting, be it what it may be.

So we are having a flood of these families who are coming. Many of them have never worked. So you must put in place the support services that they need in order to get them in a work mode. The welfare to work reform does not have built into it the day care that they provide a component that is called family services or social services. They are only concerned about getting someone out of the house and getting this person on some training and on the job, but it takes more than that.

In Head Start, we are not interested in just getting them on the job. We are interested in keeping them on the job. So consequently, the family services component of Head Start, we have had to expand it considerably in order to meet the needs of the families who are now going to work.

Chairman **Riggs**. Okay. Let me stop you there and turn to Dr. Enriquez.

Dr. **Enriquez**. Absolutely. It has changed. We are able now to collaborate more with the public schools in terms of dual enrolling children so that parents can go to work. And we have gone an additional step of providing jobs and skills training and jobs for parents where we have looked at the community and have found that our school districts are in desperate need for bus drivers.

We have trained parents as bus drivers and gotten them their CDL, and they are now employed in the public schools as bus drivers, as cooks, as teacher assistants, and as office clerks. This year alone, when we started the program, we graduated 68 parents and placed them in jobs. So, yes, it is changing the way we are doing business.

Chairman **Riggs**. Do you know offhand, ladies, because I don't think we prepared you to respond to this, but what are your numbers in El Paso and San Antonio respectively? Are they consistent with the national

average that shows the figures that I quoted in my opening comments indicating about 10 percent of Head Start programs are full time, though we have studies showing that 40 percent of Head Start families need full-time care? Do you have any idea what the numbers are?

Ms. **Russ-Glover**. That is not the case in San Antonio. As a matter of fact, all total, we service 9,014 children. 90 percent of the families in San Antonio are receiving full-day service. This has been a fact since about 1979.

I do know that across the country the majority of the Head Start programs are only serving four year olds, and they are not in a full-day program. They should be, though. We have been, and I need to piggyback on this. When you talk about giving local programs the flexibility to meet the needs, and if this occurs, you are going to have full-day programs, because the need in San Antonio has existed since 1979.

And this is why we have gone and gotten additional funding over and above Head Start to be able to extend this day so that they can have full day.

Chairman **Riggs**. Now you see the dilemma where we feel like we are being pushed and pulled in so many different directions. Expand the Early Head Start set aside as the senate committee has done and as Congressman Martinez is recommending. So we are being tugged that direction. We are being tugged over here to do more for those that are currently eligible.

And then we have, yet, this other, I think, very urgent necessity, and that is to address the effects of implementing the federal welfare reform mandate necessitating, I think, more full-day full-year slots. And so we are kind of feeling betwixt and between.

Ms. **Enriquez**. And it varies from community to community, because in El Paso, predominantly a Hispanic community, we have parents that, yes, they are going to go to work, but "I am not going to give you my three year old for the whole day. He is too little. I am going to have my grandma, I am going to have my aunt, I am going to have somebody else take care of him for half a day."

And so we find that a lot. And I was talking to a director in New York, and she was expressing the same thing. She says, "You know, that happens to me in New York. I have a predominantly Hispanic community that will not, they are working, but they will not let us work with their child the full day because they are too little."

"They're my babies. I cannot give them to you the full day. But I will have my grandma take care of them."

Chairman **Riggs**. Your point is very well taken that we need to provide for national flexibility which is consistent with the long-standing history of local control in decision making in the Head Start program.

The point I was trying to make is, here we have a six-year period doubled the federal taxpayer funding for Head Start from \$2.2 billion in 1992 to \$4.4 billion this year, federal fiscal year 1998, yet the program is only serving 40 percent an estimated 40 percent of eligible children, and we have all these other needs and demands coming on line.

One other question for Dr. Rodriguez and Dr. Hatton, and that is, we have had witnesses back in Washington basically tell us that, as I said earlier, Head Start has lost its focus. It has lost its interest in educational results in that it does not have a clear enough instructional mandate. Would you agree with those other witnesses who preceded you?

Dr. **Rodriguez**. Well, I think, given where we have been and what the needs have been at that time, Head Start has been serving the purpose for which it was originally intended. I think that we have evidence that it has been doing a good job.

I believe that our needs are changing, and as we continue to find out more about how children learn and what it is that we need to do and given the realities of the 21st century where we have to get our population ready for the 21st century, it is imperative that we begin to look at what else we can do at an early age.

And so I believe that one of those has to be one of those things we need to look at, and that is to redesign the Head Start program so it has a more instructional focus but without losing sight of the fact that we still need to be sensitive to the developmental ages of the children so that we don't just blanket them by saying we need to get them ready by the time or to have them reading by the time they enter kindergarten, but rather that we give them the necessary skills that will eventually lead to reading so that it isn't so prescriptive that we have a standard that says, you know, by the time all children are five years old, they all need to be at the same place at the same time, because we know that not all children develop at the same rate.

Chairman **Riggs**. I want to pursue this further, but I also want to defer to my colleagues. I want to give Dr. Hatton a chance to respond, though.

Do you think Head Start needs a new or renewed emphasis on the instructional focus?

Dr. **Hatton**. I believe that, yes, it does need a renewed emphasis. I want to talk about my experience with the Hidalgo County Head Start in that they have transitioned to that emphasis. They have worked very collaboratively with the regional service center and with the public schools so that the early childhood curriculum and instructional program that is offered in the Head Start program is at least driven by the same standards, the same activities as the early childhood curriculum in the public schools.

And it is very much enriched with academic emphasis. But I know what I read in the literature, and that is that we still have many early childhood or early learning programs that are lagging behind in terms of embracing the notion that academic readiness or school readiness training, early literacy development and cognitive development can be achieved successfully in early learning programs.

So I think that it is something that needs to be emphasized. I agree, so that all programs level up to that.

Chairman **Riggs**. As educator specialists, by the way, let me salute all of you for the tremendous work that you are doing, and I have, prior to becoming the chairman of this committee, long subscribed to the view that teaching is a missionary occupation, going back to my days as a local school board member in my hometown in California, including my two terms as school board president.

I really believe the old saying that a teacher can affect eternity, because they never know what their influence might have. But that said, do you think that there is a need for more coordination between Head Start programs and local public schools to address this problem, which is commonly known as the fade-out phenomenon?

Dr. **Hatton**. I do, and I think my written testimony clearly points to the fact that I support a very strong linkage, if not a school-based model for Head Start programs so that we can have that shared, not just the shared responsibility, but the shared ownership.

These children belong to us also, and what we want is a seamless transition through the academic curriculum, and that can be accomplished quite easily in the school-based model.

I think it is critical that parents continue to be empowered to be decision makers of whatever new structure is created, and that the linkages and collaborations, the mobilization of all of the resources in the community be brought into the implementation and the conceptualization even of the design.

But the children belong to that neighborhood school. There are tremendous resources that are available, not just the teachers, but the nurses, the counselors, the physical therapists, the occupational therapists, all of the kinds of services that right now are eating a lot of big dollars.

And I have been a consultant to Head Start programs, and they have paid me very nicely when I was a university professor and not in my current capacity. But there is a way that we can share resources effectively to achieve what we want. And as I said earlier, what we want is strong academic success.

What I know as an educator is that every child has the capability of learning and being successful. And it is the educational opportunities, the early experiences and learning that determine how successful that child will be. And I think that there is a way that we can enrich the child's life as early as possible so that they can meet that end.

Chairman **Riggs**. Congressman Hinojosa.

Mr. **Hinojosa**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask each of the presenters, Dr. Enriquez first and then Ms. Russ-Glover, what percentage of the eligible Head Start population do you serve in El Paso?

Dr. **Enriquez**. Gosh, as I was quoting you the figures, there are 24,700 children, three- and four-year-old children in El Paso County.

Mr. **Hinojosa**. Who are eligible?

Dr. **Enriquez**. Who are eligible. Out of all those children, we are only serving 11,000, combining public schools and Head Start. We have been talking a lot with the public schools.

Being part of the service center, I am in a real special position in that I am privy to all the superintendents and the principals, and we are able to work very well. And in some districts, what we have done, is we have changed our focus.

We in Head Start will primarily pick up all the three year olds, and the public schools will work with the four year olds. That way, we are maximizing our money and our facilities, and we are able to serve more children. That, of course, brings with it the collaboration of aligning the curriculum and having our teachers visit each other so that the kindergarten teachers know what the Head Start teachers are doing

and vice versa, and so we are able to do a continuous educational program for our children.

To that you add the parents as well, because we transition our parents into that system to where parents know how to negotiate the school system as well, learn what services there are and how they can continue to participate as they have been in Head Start.

Mr. **Hinojosa**. You are above the average. The average nationally is 40 percent, and yours is at about 45 percent. So you are doing very well. Ms. Glover.

Ms. **Russ-Glover**. In San Antonio I wish we could say the same. With Head Start dollars, we are only serving about 18 percent with Head Start dollars. But if you take into consideration all of the different funding streams that we have, we are up to something like about 35 percent.

Mr. **Hinojosa**. Very good. Let me speak to the next question. Ms. Russ-Glover, is there any collaboration between your program in San Antonio and Hidalgo County Head Start program? Have y'all ever met?

Ms. **Russ-Glover**. Well, as members of the Texas Head Start Association, yes, we have meetings where Head Start programs in the state of Texas come for their meeting and for training and, of course, from the Region Six Head Start Association.

But so far as coming and dealing with the program directly, no.

Mr. **Hinojosa**. I am very impressed with the collaboration that you described with so many different entities, especially the elementary schools, utilizing those buildings. It reminds me of how the South Texas Community College came to be five years ago.

We had one campus here in McAllen where there were approximately 500 students, and because there was such a need, the demand was so much greater than we had capacity for in the buildings, we went out, I happened to be the founding chairman of the board of directors of South Texas Community College at that time we went to the school districts, superintendents, and school boards, and we asked them for use of their facilities from 4:00 in the afternoon until 10:00 at night.

And we got approximately 15 school districts to give us facilities. As a result of that, without owning the

buildings_and they provided us janitorial services, everything you described_we jumped from 500 students to 7,500 students in five years. And so this type of collaboration can be done, and it is better utilization of buildings that are paid for with local tax dollars.

And so I applaud the work and the description of what you did. Mr. Chairman, I know the time is of the essence, and I am going to stop and not ask any more questions. The presenters have done an excellent job.

Ms. **Russ-Glover**. Is it possible I could just make a very quick, quick statement? I did not talk about the collaboration with the Army base in San Antonio. They have made available to me a 1.5 brand new child development center. They just said, "Here it is. You can have it." And we now have a beautiful Head Start program on Fort Sam Houston.

And the junior college there saw what was happening at Fort Sam. They said, "Come on." So they have made themselves available to us. So I guess what I want to say, since Head Start is now big business, there was a time we had to go knocking on everyone's door. They are now knocking on our doors.

I have literally thousands of people and entities in San Antonio who want to collaborate with us or whatever of those that we currently collaborate want to give us buildings, but I am grateful to God for that, that we have been able to produce an exemplary program and meet the needs of the people.

And this is why, because of that, from the federal to local, we have the flexibility to do what we need to do to meet the needs without someone telling us from the federal government who we should collaborate with, what the needs should be, and what our curriculum should look like, because when you work with the public, and you are going to transition your children from Head Start to the public schools, you cannot transition the child and his family well if you have not built a foundation that will bridge from Head Start to public school.

Those elements must be there in the Head Start program's curriculum, and then the bridge is easy, the transition is easy, and our children enter ready to learn. And to me, it is a very simple thing, and we don't need somebody to hammer our heads saying this is how you have got to do it. We don't need that. Because if you do, you are going to have a problem. I am sorry.

Chairman **Riggs**. Congressman Martinez.

Mr. **Martinez**. Well, you could go on as far as I am concerned. We share the same philosophy. The fact I want to emphasize is that, I don't want to get into the reauthorization and then start micromanaging the

programs because that is not our role and responsibility.

And we always talk about local control, because locals know best. And all of a sudden, we say, "Hey, locals don't know best. We know best." I wish we would get it straight one way or the other, because it can't be both ways.

The fact is that, people are now offering to provide facilities for Head Start programs, where before, a long time ago, they were begging for facilities. And like I say, they had the problem of when they would renovate a place and make it better with volunteer work, because the federal law didn't allow it at the time; there were no monies available from the federal government to do it.

So they would go out and do the collaboration you are talking about with private entities in the local communities and improve these facilities. Then the landlord would throw them out and rent it for much more rent than what he was renting to them for.

But like I say, that all depends on the transition through the period of time, and those problems have corrected themselves because of local efforts and local concerns, not because of federal intervention.

We have talked about full funding for Head Start from the time I got to Congress, that is nine terms ago. And I have been through three Presidents, each of them saying, "We need to fully fund Head Start." Have we done that? No, we haven't.

We serve such a small percentage of children who are eligible, and in yours where it is a high percentage, you are serving 48 or 49 percent of the eligible population you are serving, but you are not doing it with just federal dollars, you see.

I like the way that Ms. Russ-Glover put it that if you look at only the federal dollars, it is about 17 or 18 percent. The other money is coming from the local contributions or collaboration they are doing to get them to even just the 40, 45 percent that they get.

So we have to understand that on our level when we are dealing with these problems. And I want to get to what Dr. Rodriguez was talking about in her testimony, because it is those things we should really be paying attention to when we start talking about requiring certain educational components in the Head Start program.

The Head Start program was never meant to be an educational program per se as a part of the educational system. What it was meant to be was, as the chairman said in the beginning, a program to make the child prepared to go to school. And a part of that preparedness to go to school is a comfort zone.

How many times have you seen a parent take a child to kindergarten before Head Start and that child cry and cry and cry until the parent finally had to take him home. They were not prepared. So part of preparing the for school through Head Start is to give him a comfort zone with the kind of environment he

will be in school.

It is not just the education itself. But I do agree that children can learn at a lot earlier age than we thought they could before. You talk about that window of opportunity for certain aspects of learning. One is reading, the other is math.

Let me tell you, I know this quite by heart. Earlier we were talking with the other panel about whether the kids should be taught in Spanish. Here again, we talked about that comfort zone that they need to adapt to.

They are sure not going to adapt to that comfort zone if somebody goes in and says, "Now, from now on you will speak English only." There is no way. The fact is, like I said earlier, I am not against having some performance standards that people have to measure up to.

I am very dead set against penalties of any kind other than coming in and saying, "Look, you will get an incentive, a reward." I believe more in reward creating the incentive than a punishment causing fear to create, when, under restrictions of fear, you are going to do a lot worse.

I know this from personal experience. I have three grandchildren from my oldest son. My oldest son is named Matthew Avery. And he did not learn Spanish in our home. In our home we didn't speak Spanish. In fact, I was not a good Spanish speaker, I still am not, but I will do a lot better now, because I took classes that the federal government offers at USDA. Some Members want you to speak English only, yet the government puts on programs to teach Congressmen Spanish.

The first three sessions I was in Congress, three hours a week, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, and I took Spanish lessons from professors from all over South America to learn the different dialects and the different phrases

When I went to school, I was a primary Spanish speaker. But how much of a vocabulary does a person have at five years of age? Not very much. And so from that point on, it was English only, and they would smack you with a ruler if you.

And so you lose the Spanish or any possibility of expanding that Spanish, and I think that is wrong, because I think we benefit as a society from multilingual people, whether Spanish or any other language. The fact is, I didn't realize this a long time ago.

So none of my children learned Spanish in our household. We spoke English. And as a result, my oldest son marries a girl from Ecuador who doesn't speak a lot of English. She had finished the University of Ecuador and came to this country for medical classes here, and that is where she met my son, and they fell in love, got married, and the next thing you know, her whole family is here.

But the fact is that they have three children. And I am going the long round-about way to the point that I

am trying to make about this. We on a federal level, when we are discussing these things, do not really understand and realize the point you talked about regarding the ability to learn at that age.

Because my three grandchildren learned to read, write, and speak Spanish fluently before they ever went to kindergarten. And they speak Spanish without any English accent, and they speak English without any Spanish accent. And you know what that is done? It has caused them to excel in school.

And, in fact, they were skipped several times until their mother said, "No more, because they are leaving their age group behind." And they are not, I don't think, exceptional children. I think every child that learns to speak two languages from the beginning is going to have an advantage over other children.

But I feel it is utter nonsense for us to be on this hell-bent thing about our kids having to learn English. They already have to speak English. English is the only way they can get by in this world. But it is not the only way they can get by in this world. And what is more, it is to our advantage that they maintain their language. I wish I would have maintained my language. The fact is, that I would be that much more ahead and so would everybody else.

But the kids will learn. The kids in those classes, before they leave that Head Start class in that one year, they will have learned English and more important than that, they will learn the comfort zone to get into that kindergarten class to go on in English even farther.

So I don't think we need to really worry about that. And I think we ought to leave the flexibility there in those local programs, because it is not going to hurt_ do you think that in the Head Start program in Wyoming, that they are going to worry about that? I don't think so.

Do you think in Kentucky they are going to worry about that and they have got a lot of Head Start programs. They have got a lot of poor people in Kentucky that are not minorities.

So I think that is nonsense for us to be worrying about those kinds of things. We ought to be concentrating on how we improve Head Start and how we make that link that you talked about that you have already done, and many places are doing. In my district in the cities of Rosemead and South San Gabriel and Monterey Park, the Garvey School District wants the Head Start programs.

In every school in the Garvey School District there is a Head Start program. The board of directors of the Head Start program are the local school board. They wear two hats, one as the school board and one as the board of directors as subgrantees of the Head Start program. And every school has one. And you know what that advantage is? As Mr. Hinojosa said and as you have said, they get a free classroom, absolutely free.

And so they can use the money they normally would use for the facility for the kids. That is a big advantage. And I think that if we talk about the ability to collaborate at the local level, they will collaborate with the people they need to collaborate with. They will make those links between the

education program.

And I am a firm believer that there ought to be a link between Head Start and the education program, but I don't believe that we ought to make it an education program. I just want to tell you, Dr. Rodriguez, that I am very impressed with your testimony, and I am going to take it out of the packet and take it with me, because I want to go over and over it again, because I think you hit all the points about when kids can learn and what they can learn and how fast they can learn. And I think it is something that we as members of Congress ought to look at very closely when we are deciding these things. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman **Riggs**. Thank you, Congressman Martinez. I am going to conclude the hearing with just a couple of other questions because I want to make sure we cover all the bases since we are literally on the verge of trying to draft at least an introductory version of the bill, which I am sure will go through several evolutions before becoming law.

I want to stress in part in response to Congressman Martinez's comments, that I want and I hope my extension of "we" is in a bipartisan fashion, want to build on the last reauthorization, the 1994 reauthorization which focused, in my view, very squarely on the issue of quality.

You will recall that Secretary of Health and Human Services, Donna Shalala persuaded a 47-member commission to recommend long-term changes to the Head Start program. That commission included, of course, Dr. Zigler. The findings of that commission were later incorporated into law in the form of performance standards.

So we now have, as everyone here knows, of course, national and regional performance standards that I think led in part to the greater emphasis on quality in the fact that more than 80 Head Start programs have lost funding or have simply left the program in the past five years.

So given that, I guess the question for you ladies is whether it is logical to go the next step which would be to require the Department of Health and Human Services in consultation with the legislative branch of government, the Congress, to develop performance measures that would be applied to the local Head Start grantee?

And I know Ms. Russ-Glover, you, and, I think, the National Head Start Association have mixed feelings about that very issue. I did notice, though, that Dr. Enriquez, among your recommendations, you support local performance measures. So I take it from that then that you favor the development of these kind of local performance standards and evaluating local grantees on the basis of their results or through outcome-based grantee assessments. Is that correct?

Dr. **Enriquez**. That is correct.

Chairman **Riggs**. So you do think we ought to go that next step in developing the local performance standards?

Dr. **Enriquez**. I believe that Head Start programs do a wonderful job of meeting performance standards for comprehensive services. And we get evaluated every three years. We get a federal performance review.

But I do think that within every year that each program should have some kind of standards that they can use to evaluate their own performance based on the services that they are providing and how they are designing programs and responding to performance standards. There should be some kind of an evaluation that we can show our results with.

Chairman **Riggs**. And given your recommendation, which, by the way, is very consistent with Dr. Zigler's back in Washington, could you tell us, and I open this to any of the other witnesses, if you think school readiness should be the principal performance standard applied to local grantees, and if so, perhaps name three to five school readiness skills that a five-year-old child should have upon leaving the Head Start program and entering kindergarten. Dr. Enriquez.

Dr. **Enriquez**. That would be very difficult for me to outline at this time.

Chairman **Riggs**. Well, let me extend this offer: I will keep the record of today's hearing open so that you can submit additional testimony in writing, because we very much would like to give you ample opportunity to reflect on that question, because I know that it is one that requires some serious thought.

Dr. **Enriquez**. Very serious thought.

Chairman **Riggs**. And hopefully, we will elicit from you a detailed and an expert response by extending it to all of the witnesses as well.

Dr. **Enriquez**. Absolutely. Thank you.

Mr. **Martinez**. Mr. Chairman.

Chairman **Riggs**. Yes.

Mr. **Martinez**. Can I just add to that?

Chairman **Riggs**. Of course.

Mr. **Martinez**. I understand that what you are saying is that you developed those standards locally, and you evaluate them yourself here, whoever the grantee is.

Dr. **Enriquez**. Yes.

Mr. **Martinez**. I want to make that very clear that when you make this response that you are going to make to Mr. Riggs and to the committee that you make that very clear that it is locally controlled, locally driven, not federally originated nor federally driven, because when you get in a department like the Health and Human Services, you never know who is going to be there and what bureaucrat is going to decide to interpret anything that we do from a federal level as some reason or excuse to unjustifiably take away a grant from an individual.

Ms. **Enriquez**. Absolutely, sir. I wholeheartedly support you. You expressed my feelings on that. Not federally driven, not federally mandated or dictated, so to speak, but locally designed, because programs are designed keeping in mind culturally and linguistically characteristics of each of the communities that

we serve.

Chairman **Riggs**. Yes. And I would like the process to be locally driven. I would like it to be a bottom-up process. I wonder if again, I ask all of you to give this more thought.

But I wonder if it could be something where we legislatively would articulate some broad performance goals for local grantees dealing with, for example, phonemic print. I am coming back again obviously to the more academic component.

But then allow local grantees or local grantees working with the National Head Start Association to develop the specific outcomes for measuring the attainment of those goals, because it should be a collaborative process, and, again, it should be locally driven and bottom up, and I would hope that that perhaps would speak to some of the concerns I know that Ms. Russ-Glover has.

Ms. **Russ-Glover**. Yes, I have a number of them.

Chairman **Riggs**. Well, would you both ladies give that some more thought and respond to us, please? And, in fact, obviously, I extend it to Dr. Rodriguez and Dr. Hatton.

And I couldn't conclude without asking Dr. Rodriguez taking us full circle back to the first panel. You recommended that, I think I am quoting from your testimony, that we require professional preparation and appropriate credentialing for persons who make up the personnel who work with the children.

Obviously, I personally am very intrigued by that recommendation. I think we have to move that direction. But we have heard some conflicting testimony today.

What preparation and credentials do you believe Head Start teachers should have, and would a minimum of an associate degree in early childhood education be desirable? Because my trustee right hand Denzel McGuire leaned over and told me that I perhaps had misspoken earlier. I spoke of a goal of 50 percent of all Head Start classroom teachers being credentialed or having a minimum of an associate degree.

We actually are considering that as a requirement in the reauthorization that 50 percent of all Head Start classroom teachers have a credential or degree at the end of the five-year reauthorization period. And the purpose for that is to assure, again, an emphasis on quality. So Dr. Rodriguez, I will give you a chance to respond.

Dr. **Rodriguez**. At a minimum, I would say, yes, at least an associate degree, in early childhood development specialist, but again, I would look at it in terms of how can we take some of the people who are already involved in Head Start, and how can we prepare them to eventually get to that point?

At some point, I believe we also need professional teachers that have at least a bachelor's degree. I think there ought to be some who have at least a bachelor's degree in education, but not all of the personnel needs to be at that level.

Chairman **Riggs**. Well, do you think we ought to give preference to a Head Start parent who wants to pursue...

Dr. **Rodriguez**. Yes. I think so. I think that would be great incentive for continuing to get the parents involved in Head Start, and this would give them an opportunity to continue their own education that would eventually help their own children.

Mr. **Martinez**. On that point, I just want to expand on it a little. What I hear the chairman suggesting, and what you are responding to is that, yes, in fact there should be a transition period where you increase the certification of the people that are going to be teaching the Head Start programs.

And your response was that you should give that opportunity to the parents that are in there already who have all of a sudden discovered that they need more education to help their children, and yet, they want to help other children.

So I would suggest that, or I would ask that, you feel that in legislation there should be some incentives created to provide opportunities for those scholarships such as Ms. Quintanilla spoke about.

Dr. **Rodriguez**. I think that would be a fantastic thing to happen.

Mr. **Martinez**. And then would you set it for five years is really not that long a period of time that only a percentage within any Head Start program be that qualified, bachelor of arts certified teachers, rather than, let's say, requiring 50 percent of them.

I am saying in each center developing some formula based on information provided by the Head Start programs themselves, to determine percentage of that kind of a teacher you really need in the Head Start program to help the ones that have the lesser certification.

Mr. **Hinojosa**. Will the gentleman yield on that issue?

Mr. **Martinez**. Sure.

Mr. **Hinojosa**. When we created the South Texas Community College, we were transitioning from a Texas State Technical College branch to a community college, and the requirements to teach were so different that the 78 people who were working in that branch were threatened with losing their jobs. The new credentials said you have to have 24 hours in the course that you are going to teach, be it English or math or science.

And so in the wisdom of the board of directors, we requested that a certain amount of money be earmarked to help those individuals go back to college and take courses to reach the new standard of education that was required for them to keep their jobs. Two-thirds of them took advantage of that, and within a three-year period, went on to get the necessary credentials to stay in the South Texas Community College.

So it can be done, but somebody has to raise the standards. Somebody has to raise the requirement so that the beneficiaries, who are the students, will really get the best education possible.

So it can be done, and I hope that our committee will consider this. Thank you, Chairman Riggs and Congressman Martinez.

Ms. **Russ-Glover**. I think that there is something I am getting fuzzy on. Are you saying that you no longer would want to honor the CDA, the child development credential?

Chairman **Riggs**. Oh, no.

Mr. **Hinojosa**. I am not saying that.

Ms. **Russ-Glover**. You would still want to honor the child development credential?

Chairman **Riggs**. Absolutely.

Ms. **Russ-Glover**. Now, as you know through the TTA funds, funds can be used to pay for your staff to go to college to get an AA or a child development credential. Will there be additional dollars put in the TTA in order for this, because remember, we are dealing with a number of teachers who would have to go at night. Unless you are going to give local programs more money to have substitutes, they would have to go at night. They would have to have baby-sitters. They have got to have transportation. Then are you going to provide extra funding is what I want to know.

Mr. **Hinojosa**. May I say this? There is already money in Pell grants that is available today if you simply apply, and those Pell grants are over \$3,000. They can be used. They can be used at the community college for an associate degree.

And there is, in the community college right here in our county, available monies for day care assistance and so forth. So there is, other than Head Start, money available to achieve what we are trying to do, and that is to raise the level of education attainment throughout our entire county.

Ms. **Russ-Glover**. Well, I am fully aware of the Pell grant, and a number of our parents already take advantage of those. But if the federal government is going to mandate that you have extra percentage of your teachers with a bachelor's degree or an AA. If the federal government is going to mandate it, you need to pay for it.

Chairman **Riggs**. Well, let me just say that we have got to be careful of the "we," "you" part, because that leads to the finger pointing when it is all "we."

We all pay, almost all of us pay taxes. Those of us that don't, want to pay taxes, I am sure. But your point is well taken, and these are open questions that will be, I hope, resolved in very close consultation with you and our other witnesses here today and other people who are concerned about the reauthorization of Head Start.

I mean, we know we have a vast community of stakeholders out there, if you will, and we are trying to listen carefully. We are trying to stretch that precious but finite taxpayer dollar to the nth degree. Remember now folks, funding has doubled in six years, \$2.2 to \$4.4 billion. So this is a high priority federal program, and it is going to continue to receive, I think, priority attention and emphasis in funding decisions back in Washington.

Mr. **Hinojosa**. Mr. Chairman.

Chairman **Riggs**. Yes.

Mr. **Hinojosa**. Before concluding we have been able to bring some very important questions to the table, and even though some have not been resolved, the committee is going to be studying them, addressing them, and hopefully resolving it during reauthorization.

But something that is very clear to me is that we have listened to representatives of exemplary programs in El Paso and San Antonio, and we have discussed the requirement, not the requirement, but the wish of the people to have local flexibility.

And I think that our program, Hidalgo County, and the parents, should be given local flexibility after having heard about a programs that are run by a nonprofit organization and Region Nineteen Education Service Center as grantees. Our people should compare what these entities have done, because all we have seen has been a political entity, the County Commissioners Court as the grantee.

And so I think that it has been very interesting and informative for our public, our citizens, to see that there is another way of operating and managing our Head Start program. I believe that this has opened our eyes and informed us and educated us to what is out there.

Hopefully, as we move into the 21st century, we will have the best for our children, we will give them the same opportunities of having the best possible education in the Head Start program. So I wanted to have that on the record.

Chairman **Riggs**. Thank you, Congressman Hinojosa. Congressman Hinojosa, do you have anything else that you want to introduce for the record?

Mr. **Hinojosa**. Yes, I do. I mentioned this to you during the break. I have shared with my constituents that in my first term I have been able to make friends with the President and with members of the Cabinet, and one of those members of the Cabinet is Secretary Shalala.

And during these last 30 to 60 days, I have been talking not only to the Secretary but to some of the members of the Washington office on the Head Start program, and I have expressed some of the concerns of our county and our citizens.

And I received this morning a letter dated July the 7th, 1998, from the Secretary, and if I may, I would like to make it a part of the record. And possibly, if you allow me to read a few excerpts from this letter, which says, may I?

Chairman **Riggs**. Yes. Without objection, the letter will be included in the record.

Mr. **Hinojosa**. It reads, "Dear Mr. Hinojosa, I appreciate your sharing with me your views about how to strengthen Head Start services to low-income children in Hidalgo County, Texas. Head Start remains an important priority for our administration. The program is playing a critical role in preparing our nation's most vulnerable children for school and for success in later life.

"In recent years we have made significant progress in assuring that all Head Start programs provide high-quality services in expanding enrollment so that we reach the goal of serving one million children by the year 2002 and in making the program more responsive to the changing needs of families.

"We appreciate your support of Head Start and particularly your efforts to help more children in Hidalgo County receive Head Start services and to be sure they are served by effective and well-managed programs. In support of these efforts, I wish to confirm that I have asked Helen H. Taylor, associate commissioner of the Head Start Bureau, to insure the following sections:

"First, we will conduct an assessment of the unmet need for Head Start services in Hidalgo County in order to obtain an accurate picture of the resources that are available in the county and the number of children that remain unserved. As funds become available to increase enrollment, this information will help us assure that Hidalgo County is given fair and equitable consideration for increased funding.

"Secondly, we will arrange a comprehensive on-site review of Hidalgo County Commissioners Court Head Start program by a team of experts to determine whether the program is operating in compliance with Head Start performance standards and to identify any areas where program services might be strengthened.

"We expect this review to be conducted this fall after program services resume following the summer break. As information becomes available from these reviews, I will provide it to you. Thank you again for your support of Head Start. Sincerely, Donna Shalala, Secretary of Health and Human Services."

Chairman **Riggs**. Thank you, Congressman Hinojosa. That letter will appear in its entirety in the record and official transcript of today's proceedings. We also want to thank you for hosting us here.

We want to thank, obviously, the city of McAllen, the mayor, city council members for allowing us the use of their very nice chambers here.

And I am going to conclude by again simply saying what I said at the outset, which is, we want to insure that Head Start is a high quality early childhood developmental and education program and that it serves the child care needs of working families as we make this transition to the welfare reform limitation.

Head Start children should start school ready to learn and ready to read. And if the Head Start program is not giving that extra advantage to Head Start children, it is not a high-quality program, and, therefore, in my mind, should not continue to exist.

I think all of us up here realize, I certainly do, and I defer to Congressman Martinez, who has more experience than I do, but the more I serve in an elected office, the more I realize that there is nothing more important than what happens with our children, and they are, in fact, our children.

They represent our common hopes, our dreams, our mission, and we want to maximize the potential of every child. We also realize, as several of our witnesses testified today, how important those early years are. The first years last forever. They do set the foundation for school and for life.

But far too many of our children are not getting the kind of start in life they need, and that is what we are all about. We are trying to give them that head start, that even start they so richly deserve.

So, ladies and gentlemen, again, thank you to this panel of witnesses. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you. We are adjourned.

[Whereupon, the subcommittee was adjourned.]