

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

September 25, 2019

United States Department of Health of Human Services
Office of Administration for Children and Families
Office of Head Start
Dr. Deborah Bergeron, Executive Director
330 C St. SW
Washington DC 20201

Dear Dr. Bergeron,

On behalf of the Head Start children and families in Pennsylvania's 5th Congressional District, it is my pleasure to support the Delaware County Intermediate Unit (DCIU) Head Start program's application to the United States Department of Education, to be re-designated as the Head Start grantee for Delaware County, Pennsylvania. I commend the DCIU Head Start program for having been the sole service provider for federally subsidized preschool in Delaware County and lauded for providing high quality social and educational supports to the families throughout Delaware County for the last twenty years.

As a longtime education rights advocate who believes that all students should have access to quality public education, I believe that expanding access to early childhood education for all students and families must be a national priority. Therefore, I support this application for several reasons. First, Head Start provides a valuable service in Delaware County, by helping prepare children and their families for kindergarten. Without it, over one thousand County children would not have the opportunity to take advantage of a proven, comprehensive early childhood program in our county. Second, through Head Start, DCIU offers families, many of which face academic, economic and social challenges, a continuum of services for children birth to five through center-based, home-based, and preschool age programs, and assists those families with increasing both their earning potential and educational opportunities. to help address poverty levels.

I serve a very diverse district, comprised of communities of a continuum of wealth and poverty. In Delaware County alone, several school districts have a majority of students at or near poverty, and many families within those districts qualify for the Head Start program. Fortunately, DCIU has established Head Start classrooms and centers in each of these districts. We appreciate support for these programs are pleased that some of our youngest children are receiving quality services from DCIU Head Start. If not for this program, preschool might be unattainable for some families because of the rising costs. In addition, we know that by placing an emphasis on family wellness, embracing education as a path toward self-improvement, and nurturing strong ties between DCIU's staff and families, DCIU's role in our communities is important in solidifying kindergarten readiness.

Finally, the DCIU Head Start program is child-focused and has an overall goal of increasing social, emotional, cognitive and physical development for young children. Head Start offers family members opportunities and support for growth and change, knowing that people can identify their own strengths, needs and interests and are capable of finding solutions. Accordingly, I wholeheartedly support DCIU's continued management of the program in Delaware County.

Sincerely,



Mary Gay Scanlon
Member of Congress