

CITY OF OAKLAND



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#LoveLife
REBECCA KAPLAN NIKKI FORTUNATO BAS SHENG THAO CARROLL FIFE
Vice Mayor Council President President Pro Temp Councilmember D3

Date: August 31, 2021

To: Members of City Council and Members of the Public

From: Vice Mayor Kaplan, Council President Fortunato Bas, President Pro Temp Thao, and Council Member Fife

Re: **RESOLUTION TO AMEND RESOLUTION 88717 C.M.S. WHICH ADOPTED THE CITY OF OAKLAND BIENNIAL BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEARS 2021-23, TO ALLOCATE \$1.836 MILLION FROM THE GENERAL PURPOSE FUND TO THE HEAD START PROGRAM AS SET FORTH IN EXHIBIT 1 TO THIS RESOLUTION AND TO DIRECT THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR TO INCLUDE RELEVANT ENHANCEMENTS TO THE LINCOLN SQUARE RECREATION CENTER RENOVATION CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND IN THE FISCAL YEAR 2022-23 MID-CYCLE BUDGET ADJUSTMENT**

Dear Colleagues on the City Council and Members of the Public,

On June 30, 2021, the Head Start program was awarded \$12.2 million from the State of California, \$5.5 less than the \$17.8 million that was requested. Due to the funding reduction, program administrators proposed closing three sites, which would result in the program serving fewer children than it had previously served in FY 20-21. This resolution proposes using funds from other budget adjustments, largely vacancy savings, to support restoring the Head Start program in the City of Oakland.

Head Start is a federally and state funded early childhood education program that promotes school readiness for children from birth to age five and offers free early childhood education and family services to low-income Oakland residents. These services include individualized early childhood education, health services, family services, disabilities services, and nutrition services. Head Start is a vital program in our communities, and has well documented benefits for a child's educational preparedness, health, and future economic opportunity.

This resolution aims to ensure that children in Chinatown, East Lake, and East Oakland have the same access to the education and services that their peers in other parts of the City do and prevent those children from facing worse outcomes in their future. By prioritizing the closure of the Tassafaronga, Arroyo Viejo, and Franklin Center Head Start sites, all of which are in predominantly communities of color and low-income communities, it will negatively impact children and their families to receive high-quality and accessible on-site early childhood education and family services. Many of these families may not have access to a car, and traveling a farther distance may not be feasible. By closing these sites, it threatens our social cohesion in this struggling economy as workers can't go to jobs if their child care is taken away, especially given

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that the cuts are planned for September 1st. Furthermore, by directing the City Administrator to include the relevant enhancements to the renovations of the Lincoln Square Recreation Center to add Head Start Center capacity, it will allow for a Head Start site to be located in Chinatown, which is currently an underserved area.

It is urgent that we fully restore the Head Start program, which is a critical need in our communities. Inaction on this issue, and allowing the Head Start program to close these sites on September 1, 2021, would be an urgent crisis in service and violate our equity principles. The children face many worse outcomes for their future if they lose access to the Head Start program in their own communities. By allocating \$1.836 million from budget adjustments, largely vacancy savings, we can restore the Head Start program, keep the sites open, prevent layoffs of Head start staff, and continue to provide high-quality and easily accessible early childhood education and services for families throughout Oakland. We ask you to join us in supporting this resolution.