

Hey February! What happened to January? For me January is always a hard month. I am such a kid at heart and enjoy every minute of the holidays. This makes January a letdown. But, WOW, did this January fly by! I have lots to share with you! First, I just came back from Washington DC. As you can guess there is much going on. I had several small meetings with key leaders regarding the increase in minimum wage. The impact on eligibility is huge for us and a key issue for Illinois. To change the federal poverty level will take opening up Head Start for Reauthorization and many believe that this would be a mistake. But what other options do we have? We are hard at work with coming up with other solutions. Other urgent needs addressed was the movement of universal prekindergarten and childcare. How does Head Start fit within the movement? Governor Pritzker just announced he is supporting “universal home visiting.” How will Head Start fit in? The meeting with the Office of Head Start was interesting. Several key things to note include: OHS is working with the National Superintendent Association and the National Elementary Principal Association and has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with both Associations; the new announcement from the Secretary of HHS on duration stating that 45% of Head Start enrollment must meet the 1020 hours by 2021; the final rules for DRS are projected to come out in late summer, and last but not least, a Program Instructions on Quality Improvement dollars will be coming out soon; the projection shared was that the dollars will be based on the number of children you are serving, \$250 for a Head Start slot and \$350 for EHS.

We’ve been working with the Illinois Office of Early Childhood Development on Parent Cafes. This has been exciting work with developing Parent Leaders who lead and facilitate Parent Café’s for parents. Key topics have been around attendance and suspension and expulsion.

We’ve been preparing for the IHSA Annual Conference. Are you ready? The dates are March 11-13th at the President Abraham Lincoln/Doubletree Hotel in Springfield. Here are five reasons to attend and register at <https://annualconference2020.zohobackstage.com/ilheadstart>.

5 Great Reasons to Attend:

1. **There’s something for everyone:** The 2020 Annual Conference has something for every Head Start agency role type in the field – education managers, family services, home visitors, ERSEA managers, parents, program directors, health managers, mental health & disabilities, teachers, and more!
2. **Stay ahead of the curve:** With over 35 sessions to choose from, learning opportunities abound! You can be sure to expect cutting edge and timely topics delivered by trusted experts in the early childhood and Head Start field. Connect with subject matter experts and add a new resource to your contacts.
3. **Face-to-face networking opportunities:** There will be ample opportunity to connect and network with your counterparts from across the state. Share best practices or bounce ideas off someone during the course of the week. Early childhood professionals from diverse programs will gather to share their knowledge and experience, providing an unmatched opportunity to build your network of professionals you can rely on for support and information.
4. **Get inspired by our keynotes:** We’re excited to announce that Dr. Steve Perry will be kicking off our conference! Dr. Steve Perry is one of the most sought-after Nationwide Motivational Speaker in America. Widely respected by grassroots community members and internationally renowned leaders as an educator, social worker and public speaker, his charismatic and compelling voice is an inspiration. He is the educator Oprah Winfrey, Sean "P-Diddy" Combs, Bishop TD Jakes and Steve Harvey call on to offer insight to parents and children. To close out our time, we will hear from Head Start alum Rachel Giannini who will join us to talk about her journey from preschool teacher to advocate and how she engages fun and creativity to make learning magical. Rachel is a childhood specialist, an early childhood advocate, and a video blog host. She is currently the writer, director, and on-screen talent for a series of video blogs for the Chicago Children’s Museum and the feature-

length documentary, "No Small Matter". Don't miss the exclusive viewing "No Small Matter" on Thursday night during our movie get-together. If you're needing a morale boost, do not miss these keynotes!

5. **Exhibits:** The exhibit area will be packed with the latest services and vendors to cover all your program needs! Whether you're looking for a new vendor for technology and data service, furnishings and supplies, professional development or employee benefits, our exhibitors are sure to have what you're looking for.

Recently, I read an article on Ten Quotes by Confucius That Will Change Your Life Forever. I thought this was interesting as it is the beginning of a new year. Confucius (551– 479 BC) was a Chinese philosopher and politician. His philosophy, known as Confucianism, is mainly known for personal and governmental morality, the correctness of social relationships, justice, and honesty. Confucius is famous for being one of the most important and influential individuals shaping our history. His philosophy enormously affected people all over the world and is still dominant.

Here are **10 insightful quotes** Confucius shared with humankind throughout his presence:

"The Man Who Asks a Question Is a Fool for a Minute, the Man Who Does Not Ask Is a Fool For Life"

"If Your Plan Is for 1 Year, Plant Rice. If Your Plan Is for 10 Years, Plant Trees. If Your Plan Is for 100 Years, Educate Children"

"Respect Yourself and Others Will Respect You."

"It Does Not Matter How Slowly You Go as Long as You Do Not Stop"

"Your Life is What Your Thoughts Make it"

"By Three Methods We May Learn Wisdom: First, by Reflection, Which Is Noblest; Second, by Imitation, Which Is Easiest; And Third by Experience, Which Is the Bitterest"

"If You See What is Right, and Fail to Act on it, You Lack Courage"

"If You Hate a Person, You are Defeated by them"

"You Cannot Open a Book Without Learning Something"

"He Who Chases Two Rabbits Catches None"

Which one do you like? My favorite right now is "He Who Chases Two Rabbits Catches None." For me, going after too many things at once hardly ends up in success, but rather in confusion and disappointment. So, my goal is to laser focus on several key projects so I can bring them over the finish line. I'll let you know how this goes!

I hope to see you at the IHSA Annual Conference! Bringing our community together is always energizing and so exciting. So if you are looking for something to energize you and a place to learn new strategies, the IHSA Annual Conference is a great opportunity! As always, I appreciate YOU and the work you do! Thank you!

Take care,

Lauri

