



**For Immediate Release
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**HEMPSTEAD SCHOOL DISTRICT CUTS
PARENT-CHILD HOME PROGRAM,
AN EARLY LITERACY/SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAM
SERVING 130 FAMILIES A YEAR FOR OVER 20 YEARS**

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OVER 65 FAMILIES/HOME VISITORS PROTEST FUNDING CUTS

Hempstead, NY -- The Hempstead School District today announced budget cuts eliminating the community's *only* school readiness program for families with 2- and 3-year-old children at a meeting of the Hempstead School Board at A.B. Gray Schultz Middle School here.

The Parent-Child Home Program, founded and headquartered on Long Island, serves 130 communities across the nation. It focuses on helping parents prepare their children to enter school ready to learn through literacy and language development activities. The program is a 36-year-old, research-based and research-validated program that has consistently demonstrated that participation substantially improves children's school success rates, including their school readiness, performance on standardized achievement tests, and high school graduation rates. It is an intensive two-year home visiting program that prepares children for school success and empowers parents to realize their role as their children's first and most important teacher. In light of the current *No Child Left Behind* debate, the program plays the critical role of ensuring that no child enters school unprepared and unable to compete.

"This program is a shining light not only for the Hempstead School District but also for the Hempstead community," said Frank Small, Pre K teacher, Hagedorn Center.

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The Hempstead program is The Parent-Child Home Program's largest on Long Island currently serving approximately 130 families. Sponsored by the Hempstead School District since 1994, the program has served families in the Hempstead community for over 20 years.

A study of the school readiness of Long Island school children who participated in the Parent-Child Home Program conducted by Dr. LaRue Allen, Director of the Child and Family Policy Center at New York University, led her to conclude that, "The Parent-Child Home Program appears to be successfully bridging the achievement gap for these children, preparing them to enter school as ready to learn as their more advantaged peers."

Many of the 130 participating families are entering the critical second year of the program and approximately 60 families with two-year-olds have already been interviewed and recruited. Over 65 families and Parent-Child Home Program home visitors protested against these devastating cuts at the school board meeting.

"This is the beginning of a new pathway to early education," said Gisella Osorio, Parent-Child Home Program home visitor and former parent participant who had planned to visit 12 families this school year.

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